

WEAC REGION 2 - REPORTER

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

STUDENT SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

\$5,800 WEAC Scholarships Available for Children of Union Members

The children of WEAC members who plan to become Wisconsin teachers are eligible for scholarships of \$1,450 per year for four years of college or university study. WEAC awards four scholarships per year to high school seniors in Wisconsin.

The deadline to apply is February 1, 2018.

Application forms and more information about the scholarships can be found [on the WEAC website](#).



SCHOLARSHIPS



Region 2 Scholarship Forms Available in Area Schools

Region 2 will award two scholarships in the amount of \$500 each to graduating high school seniors of current Region 2 members. Scholarship information and application forms were mailed to high school counselors in December. The information and the form is also available from the Region 2 office and on the Region 2 website. If you have a son or daughter in a public high school that will be graduating this spring and who plans to continue their education after graduation, they are eligible for the scholarship. There are no restrictions regarding the course of study, the University or Tech College they plan to attend. **The deadline for RECEIPT of applications is March 16, 2018.** Applications must be in the Region 2 office no later than the close of the business day. Scholarship recipients will be notified in mid to late April. Scholarships will be presented May 10, 2018 at the Region 2 Representative Assembly.



CENTRAL WI SCHOOL BOARDS CALLING FOR VOUCHER FUNDING TRANSPARENCY

Public schools throughout Wisconsin are facing budget shortfalls. This is not news. What is news is that Wisconsin school boards are taking action to raise awareness of the negative impact private school vouchers are having on their budgets. School boards are passing resolutions in support of Assembly Bill 267 and Senate Bill 183, which call for more transparency in how private school vouchers are funded. What does that mean? There is no question education makes up a significant portion of our property taxes, but the average property owner may not realize state aid is being diverted away from local school districts and used to fund local private school vouchers. When state aid is diverted away from the school districts, the school boards have only 2 options. They can either 1) reduce their budgets and lose the funding permanently, resulting in lost opportunities and programs for public school students, or 2) replace the lost aid by raising local property taxes.

Currently, individual property tax bills do not identify the amount of state aid taken from the local public schools to support private voucher schools, and taxpayers have no way of knowing how much of their property tax is being used to cover the cost of private school vouchers in their district. How much state aid is lost? That depends on the school district. In 2017-18, the State will divert almost \$602,000 away from the Wausau School District to support private voucher schools in Wausau. Stevens Point Area Schools will lose almost \$542,000 to private schools in that district. Marshfield will lose more than \$254,000. But make no mistake; this is not just a large school district issue. Spencer will lose more than \$45,000, Loyal \$27,000, and Edgar and Granton will each lose \$8,176. School boards in these districts have been forced to cut their budgets permanently or raise local property taxes.

Area school boards want their constituents to know what using public money to fund private voucher schools means to their budgets. Because they believe in transparency and every taxpayer's right to know how public money is spent, there is growing interest in requiring property tax bills to include information about the amount of state aid taken from the local school district to fund private school vouchers in the district, and the impact of that on property taxes. The following Region 2 Districts have already passed a resolution supporting transparency legislation:

Merrill
Rhineland
Stevens Point
Wausau

The following Region 2 Districts will be discussing the transparency resolution at upcoming January school board meetings:

WI Rapids
Port Edwards

So what can you do? Attend local school board meetings. Talk with your school board members. Tell them that as a taxpayer, you have the right to know the impact private voucher schools are having on your district's funding and your property tax bill. Tell them to pass the resolution in support of voucher funding transparency.





Encourage Member Sign Up NOW!!

Now is a great time to “circle back” and talk to those people that didn’t join your local in fall & re-connect with those folks that were “thinking about joining” at the beginning of the year.

Why now?

Membership is a year-long sign-up opportunity! By joining now, those “thinking about it” people become eligible to attend multiple governance and professional development opportunities available this spring and summer...many being held close to, or in, Region 2!

Like what?

Check it out below!

- ❖ WEAC Winter Professional Issues Conference—March 2-4 in Madison
- ❖ An Every Teacher A Leader Summit conference—March 9 - 10 in Chippewa Falls
- ❖ WEAC Representative Assembly—April 28 in La Crosse
- ❖ Region 2 Representative Assembly—May 10 in Merrill
- ❖ WEAC Summer Academy—Information coming soon!

Want to know more about these opportunities? Call the Region 2 office for registration information.

How do I get membership forms to join? Call or e-mail Tiffany in the Region 2 office! Reindlt@weac.org
800-472-0010 Ext. 4 for membership sign-up forms.



Take an Active Role—Be Part of our RAINBOW

Region 2 celebrates diversity. From time to time we are asked...“So—exactly how do you promote diversity in the leadership of your locals and the Region?”

Often when people hear the term “diversity” they think only in terms of race...or national heritage. In Region 2 we believe the picture deserves to be more inclusive. Regardless of your gender—whether you are a teacher or part of the education support staff—no matter whether you work in a large or a small school district—whether your students are elementary, secondary, or higher ed—no matter your political party of choice—regardless of your religious beliefs or national heritage. We want YOU. We want to hear your voice...listen to your opinions...consider your viewpoint. ALL members are encouraged to participate in the leadership of their local...and in the leadership of Region 2! It is the diversity of our membership and leadership that makes us successful. Our collective goal is to provide the best possible education for students...no matter what their age, economic or social status.

We, in Region 2 invite you to actively participate. Run for an office in your local or at the Regional level. Come to a Representative Assembly to voice opinions and vote on issues that drive the organization. Take an ACTIVE ROLE!

Region 2 welcomes you!



Mileage Rate **INCREASES** for 2018....

The IRS recently released the 2018 rate for business mileage. The new rate is 54.5 cents per mile—up one cent per mile from the 2017 rate.



Preparing to File Your Income Tax??



If you file a form 1040 and itemize your deductions on Schedule A, your local, state, and national dues may be tax deductible. Region 2 members who would like to receive a letter documenting union dues payments for 2017 can call the Region 2 office at 1-800-472-0010 Ext. 4 to talk with Tiffany. Please remember to have your name, home e-mail address and school local ready when you call. No information will be sent to a school e-mail address.

Also, be aware that Congress has extended the \$250 [Educator Tax Credit](#) for educators who purchased classroom supplies and instructional materials during calendar year 2017.

Did you know members can get a discount on tax preparation services?

Services such as H&R Block, Jackson Hewitt, Turbo Tax & Quickbooks are offered through WEAC Savers' Club. Don't forget to check out the many other discounts members can take advantage of on insurance, shopping and more! All Region 2 members are eligible to participate in the Savers' Club.



[WEAC Savers' Club](#)

Book Study Series

Connect virtually with teachers and educational support providers across Wisconsin.

Racism is the result of a complex interplay of individual attitudes, collective social values, and institutional practices. When we begin to better understand these forces, examine our own implicit bias and take small or large action, there is movement forward to irradiate racism in our schools and in our society. Join your colleagues around the state in a virtual book study facilitated by nationally renowned Restorative Practices expert and strategist Chauna Perry-Finch.

The Wisconsin Education Association Council (WEAC) and the WEA Academy are committed to promoting healing and understanding while challenging the systems that perpetuate racism. To register for one of our book study courses please [click here](#) or visit www.weacademy.org.

[See Flyer.](#)



Region 2 Office to be closed on January 15th to observe Martin Luther King, Jr. Day...

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is an American federal holiday marking the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. The idea of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day as a holiday was promoted by labor unions in contract negotiations. King was the chief spokesman for nonviolent activism in the Civil Rights Movement, which successfully protested racial discrimination in federal and state law. The campaign for a federal holiday in King's honor began soon after his assassination in 1968. President Ronald Reagan signed the holiday into law in 1983, and it was first observed three years later. It is officially observed on the third Monday of January each year, which, this year falls on King's birthday, January 15.