

SUGGESTED POWERPOINT SCRIPT

SLIDE 1:

Every day, it seems, educators are faced with a crazy, new scheme for teacher evaluations, the rush to impose Common Core, and a call to reduce pay and benefits. On top of it all, the news runs daily stories of the failures of public education. Sometimes, it feels like fighting for our students, our jobs, and our future is mission impossible given today's political climate.

But we need to put our political cynicism aside. There are a huge number of seats open in the upcoming election, from Governor down to School Board. Many of them will have competitive primary elections with a brand new primary election date of June 24th so it's imperative we start phase one of Mission Possible now.

MSEA (or name of your local) is determined to protect what we have in Maryland and fight for even more. Please give me your full attention for the next 10 minutes.

I promise to keep it short so please hold questions until the end.

SLIDE 2:

I know we are the AP class of education associations but this is a great reminder of the important decisions affecting public education that are made by politicians.

[click through all decisions]

Like it or not, we have political jobs. And we have bosses making decisions impacting public schools that get elected at the state and local level.

SLIDE 3:

In the next election, we'll be voting for a new Governor, General Assembly and Local offices. Imagine we had those folks in this room and you just had 10 seconds to speak. What would you tell them needs to change in our schools?

[go around room, short discussion, find out what people care about – move on if it meanders or 1-2 members dominate discussion]

SLIDE 4:

Those are important issues, but we must remember that elections are the primary way we can gain influence and power. How strong we are at the ballot box determines how strong we are the bargaining table for our profession and for our students.

Most of the changes we want are tied to funding, which our Board of Education is not the judge or jury on. County Executives, Councils (or Commissions) decide how much funding our school system receives. On the state level, our Governor, state delegates, and state senators determine funding formulas, class size, and have had a growing influence over the latest education reforms including vouchers, charters, and evaluation assessments.

We're an award winning state with award winning educators who deserve award winning resources and compensation to guarantee that our students receive the best education. We need to make sure we have politicians who support us on the local and state level.

SLIDE 5:

Our best political tool to do that is the Fund for Children and Public Education, which helps us to run our own campaigns to elect candidates and remove our enemies on the local, state, and national level.

This Fund allows us to pool our resources so we can have more of an impact at the ballot box. By combining our small contributions via payroll deductions, we are able to elect candidates who will fight for our students and our profession.

SLIDE 6:

We choose not to spend our dues money to advocate for or against any candidate to the general public. We must use voluntary contributions given to the Fund.

We spend Fund money:

- Educating the public (through mailers, radio, commercials, etc.) when a politician does something good or bad for education.
- Gain access to fundraisers where members can educate politicians on issues like class size, pensions, evaluations, and testing.
- Because teachers are the best messengers when it comes to electing pro-public education candidates, we try to spend most of our Fund money in a third way - direct voter contact - like our highly-effective apple ballot.

We know politicians have a better memory of who put them in office when we run these independent campaigns.

SLIDE 7:

This is your political action fund. These aren't decisions made in some back room but by members. Like our students- we do our homework.

Step One: No matter what the office, we get the candidate's stance on important issues facing our profession through a questionnaire.

Step Two: The candidate is interviewed by a group of members to discuss education issues and their questionnaire.

Step Three: The interview committee will make a recommendation and whether it's the PAC Council at NEA, the MSEA Endorsement Council on the state level, or our local Representative Assembly - elected members will vote on the recommendation.

We are proud that our Fund is entirely provided by and overseen by educators with checks and balances.

SLIDE 8:

When we talk about political power, there's a saying that if we're not at the table then we're on the menu.

2014 is going to be a buffet and we want to set the table. It's up to us to own our profession and build our power by electing more pro-public education candidates to the table.

We must start now. That's why we're doing this big Fund campaign. Phase One of Mission Possible is asking you to join our political action Fund today.

SLIDE 9:

You've seen the stakes, why this is important, and what we do with your money.

We need you to help build power in 2014 by accepting this mission and joining the Fund today.

(Give your own testimony) - I'm putting my money where my mouth is and joining at the \$3 (or higher amount) per pay period because_____ (share issue that matters to you).

If having a political voice isn't incentive enough, we're holding a big prize giveaway:

- Hotel and airfare for 2 to the home of the first Mission Impossible movie, Prague, Czech Republic
- A new MacBook with retina display
- And a trip to the International Spy Museum in Washington D.C. for your class.

To comply with campaign finance laws, everyone needs to have equal access so please either check the yes or no box on this form and return it for the prize drawing.

Thank you for your 10 minutes today. I'll collect your mission forms now. Our prize drawing will be on October 19th at MSEA's annual state convention in Ocean City.