



When educators like us organize people and money we have the power to win elections.

MSEA'S FUND FOR CHILDREN AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

The most important message to convey to members is that the Fund is MSEA's issue-based, member-driven political program to ensure that our voices are heard. The Fund helps elect pro-public education candidates and holds them accountable.

What is MSEA's Fund? Why is it important? How can you help?

What? The MSEA Fund for Children and Public Education is MSEA's political action committee (PAC). We use money that is voluntarily contributed to elect pro-public education school boards, county councils, state delegates and senators, and governors. Our PAC program is also coordinated with the National Education Association's federal PAC that is our voice in

Washington and helps to elect pro-public education members of Congress.

Why? Political decisions affect our classrooms, jobs, students, and families. With enemies on the right and left attacking our union, our profession, and our funding, we can't afford to sit on the sidelines. The most powerful tool our association has to protect public schools is the MSEA Fund for Children and Public Education.

How can you help? We need association representatives like you to sign up MSEA Fund members at your work location. Contact your UniServ Director or local association president for PAC membership forms, posters, and organizing guides.

When? Right now. Asking for Fund members as you update your rosters at the beginning of a new school year is a great way to start a conversation about the

importance of the Fund and the influence your local and MSEA has with elected leaders. Some local associations incorporate the Fund and its importance into all of their association events.

Where? You can ask your members to sign-up to contribute to the Fund in your school during non-instructional time.

Need more info?
Contact Meighan Davis,
mdavis@mseanea.org,
or your UniServ Director.



These teacher candidates won! With help from the Fund, these educators, elected to office in November 2014, are standing up for students, schools, and educators around the state. Left to right: High school math teacher Amanda Stewart is a county commissioner in Charles County • Howard County high school math teacher Eric Ebersole is a state delegate • Elementary music teacher Jessica Fitzwater is a county council member in Frederick County • Carroll County physical education teacher and wrestling coach Dennis Frazier is a county commissioner.



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HOW TO RECRUIT MEMBERS TO JOIN THE MSEA FUND FOR CHILDREN AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

There isn't a one-size-fits-all script to ask a member for a Fund contribution. According to polling, 67% of NEA members would contribute to the Fund if they were asked. It's important that the Fund is understood as something members are joining as a means to building our political power, not just saying yes to another paycheck deduction.

HERE IS AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO CONNECT THE FUND WITH BUILDING POWER FOR WHAT MATTERS TO THE MEMBER. This approach follows a familiar pattern of identifying a problem that matters to the member, connecting it with a solution—building our collective political power—and asking them to join the PAC.

INTRODUCE YOURSELF—Say who you are and why this conversation will be important.

Frame the problem and discover the member's issues—What is the member concerned about? This will vary from member to member. The key to making an effective connection is to not assume a member's concerns or interests, but to find out through conversation what matters to them by asking questions.

OFFER A SOLUTION—Connect the member's interest and concerns with association programs, policies, and success stories. For example, how did a campaign and rally influence a school board decision on raises?

What if the concern is skyrocketing health insurance co-pays? Time to prepare and work with other teachers? Contracting out of janitorial services? The key is to make the connection explicit and not to assume that everyone understands that these decisions are made by elected officials.

ASK!—Make the connection and ask for the contribution. The Fund request itself, like the request to join the association or to make calls for a recommended candidate, must be:

- **Clear:** Will you sign up to make a voluntary contribution to MSEA Fund?
- **Specific:** Will you sign up to contribute \$5 per pay period? (Tip: don't start with \$1; try \$5)
- **Relevant to them:** We have a chance to fix _____. Refer to an issue that concerns them, for example, your Fund contribution will be used to promote our ideas and hold elected officials accountable.
- **Easy:** All you have to do is fill out this brief form and sign it.

WAIT—After you ask, wait patiently and silently for an answer. The member may have more questions—What does the Fund stand for? How is this part of the campaign? Can I think about it? Answer, then ask and wait again.

IF THE ANSWER IS "NO"—Ask what is holding them back? Make sure you tell them why you give, why it is important to you, and challenge them that this is one of the most important ways we improve public education for the children we teach, our profession, and the issues they care about.

IF THE ANSWER IS "YES"—Tell the member what information we need to complete the form.

THANK THEM—This is so important. The emphasis should not be that the member is doing you a favor, but that joining their colleagues in the Fund is a positive thing that should be celebrated.