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A full color electronic version of this newsletter can be found on our website.

November 2023



The



Advocate

President's Message >>>

Welcome new ACEA Members!

Unit 1

Veronica Cosby JD

Unit 4

Carol Ketterman FO

No Man is an Island...

The English writer and Poet, John Donne (1572 - 1631), certainly had a way with words, as evident in the poem "For Whom the Bell Tolls". Can you imagine what each school day would be like without your colleagues? For anything from resources to emergencies, we count on each other to persevere and thrive. During this month of Thanksgiving, perhaps you might let them know just how vital they are to your success and that of your students.

For this same reason, when the NEA Representative Assembly (the Association's decision-making body of nearly 8,000 member delegates) called on the organization to honor the contributions of all school support staff in 1987, National ESP Day has been observed on Wednesday of American Education Week.

And since the merging of ACTA and ACESC into ACEA in 2015, ACEA has committed to honoring our ESP colleagues each year with a token of our appreciation. This year, we also have an ESP Celebration planned *ESpecially* for our ESP members on National ESP Day.

We thank each of you for being part of the "continent" of ACEA, because each of us is significant and together we are stronger.

In solidarity and service,

Kim

ksloane@mseanea.org

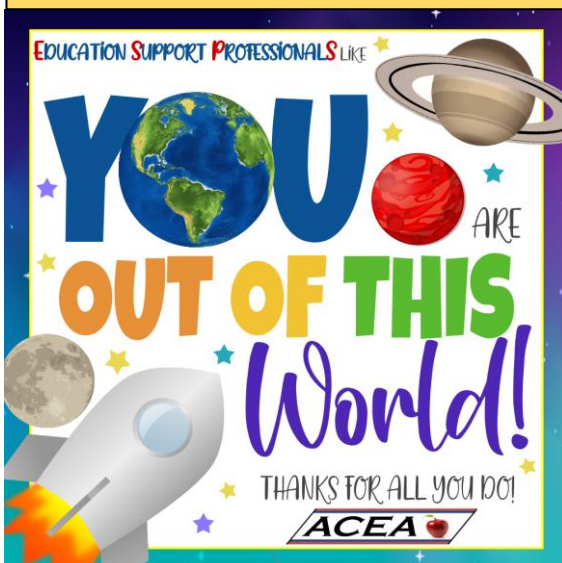
For Whom the Bell Tolls

by
John Donne

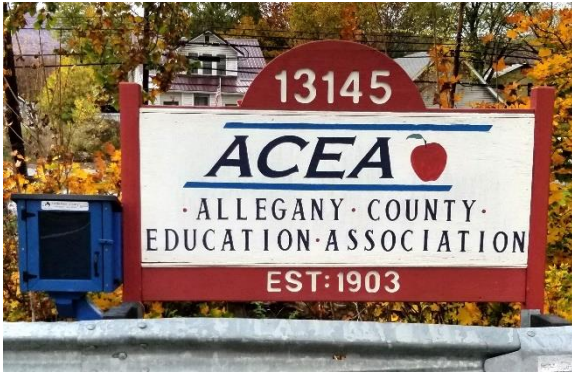
No man is an island,
Entire of itself.
Each is a piece of the continent,
A part of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea,
Europe is the less.
As well as if a promontory were.
As well as if a manor of thine own
Or of thine friend's were.
Each man's death diminishes me,
For I am involved in mankind.
Therefore, send not to know
For whom the bell tolls,
It tolls for thee.

This poem is in the public domain

November 15, 2023, is National Education Support Professionals Day!



2023 MSEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY AND CONVENTION



Eight ACEA delegates attended the annual MSEA Representative Assembly and Convention from October 19-21 in Ocean City. Among the items on the agenda for consideration were one bylaw amendment, three New Business Items (NBI's), one rules amendment and a nominations and elections guidelines amendment.

Our delegate team also worked on the construction of a [Little Free Library](#) compliments of MSEA and which now hangs on our ACEA sign at the office where anyone can take or share a book.

If you would like to attend the 2024 MSEA Convention and RA as an ACEA delegate, **you must be nominated and elected** during our 2024 election cycle which is currently in the nomination phase until November 17. If interested, nominations forms can be found on our [website](#), or contact the ACEA office for more information. Pictured clockwise L to R, are Jill Bell (WM), Stewart Monroe, Jr. (CCTE), Amy Duncan (WM), Kelly Griffin (SP), Debbie Weisenmiller (MS), Jason Huber (CO), Dawn Riley-Shepetuk (AL), and Kim Sloane (ACEA).

What is "The Union"?

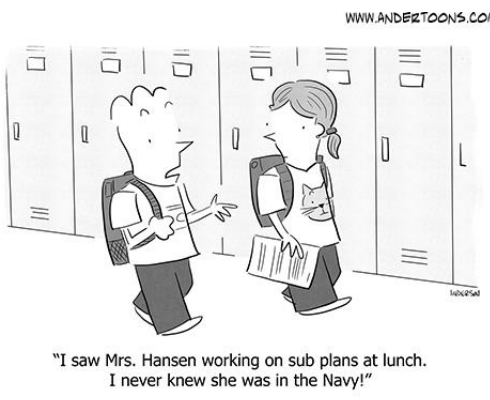
Cresta Kowalski, UniServ Director

What is a union? They are important right? Working in the US today, there are over 14.3 million people belonging to unions; the four largest unions in the US are the National Education Association, the Service Employees International Union, the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and the Teamsters. According to NEA, an association/union is "A group of employees who unite and have legal rights to form a democratic group that advocates for better conditions at their workplace on behalf of themselves and others." What does that mean to us here in Allegany County Public Schools?

The union is not an outside entity. So often we hear, "The union will (fill in the blank with an action from Santa's wish list of items)," like it is a force that works from the outside. Not at all- the union is YOU! Any employee who is a member is the union and can make changes for better working conditions for themselves and others. The union does nothing without prompting from the membership, and you can make the change you want to see at your workplace because you have the power!

A union membership is like a gym membership-you get out of it what you put into it. Just like a gym, unions need active members who want to see the best outcome in the long run. Ways you can participate in ACEA (our local affiliate of MSEA and NEA) is to get active: come to a 10-minute meeting, become a building representative, attend an ACEA sponsored event after hours, or communicate needs in your building to the ACEA office through email or a call. Union membership and participation has monetary benefits, and we can point you in the right direction with what MSEA and NEA have to offer you for savings in monthly budget as well!

Mahatma Gandhi's famous quote "Be the change you wish to see in the world," is very fitting to the union conversation because the union is the members; no change happens in our schools without member participation and activation. There have been some differences made in just the past month, and I am emboldened by the changemakers joining in the work. I hope to see you become an active participant of ACEA and make our union the strongest source of support for educational professionals working in our schools.



Toys For Happiness!

Since 2005, ACEA (formerly ACTA), in conjunction with ACPS, has hosted an annual Denim Day for Toys for Happiness collection to support this local charity and help spread the spirit of giving in our community. Over the past 18 years, this event has collected more than 5,000 toys and \$30,000 dollars in donations for this worthy cause!

This year, **Tuesday, November 28 will be designated as the Denim Day for Toys for Happiness.** This year we will again collect both toys and monetary donations. Toys and monetary donations (cash or checks) will be accepted at each work location that day, and can be given to one of your building representatives or another designated individual, who will forward all to ACEA. Checks should be made out directly to Toys For Happiness.

We encourage staff to consider making a \$5 minimum donation. In exchange for your support of this event, Mr. Blank has once again agreed to permit the wearing of seasonal garb and denim to work on this day. So, dust off those ugly sweaters for a beautiful reason.