

Dear MACAE Members & Friends,

We kicked off MACAE's membership renewal and new member recruitment for the 2009-10 fiscal year and have received 113 applications so far. That's about where we were this time last year, except this year a fourth of those applications are from new members. If you have not renewed your membership yet or know of colleagues who could really benefit from joining MACAE, your follow-up is greatly needed and appreciated.

Why should you continue to support and help MACAE grow?

MACAE is the only organization in Michigan that actively advocates for Community and Adult (including Literacy & ESL) Education, including Early Childhood Development & Childcare, Alternative Education, Before and After School, Recreation & Enrichment. No other membership-based advocacy organization makes the case for the big picture view of Community Education and these programs are strongest and most effective when they are integrated under the Community Education umbrella. Children, youth, adults, families and communities as a whole, all benefit when they have the opportunity to experience lifelong learning opportunities together!

ADVOCACY

This past school year, MACAE had one of its most successful years ever as an advocacy organization.

By working together, we:

- Built bi-partisan support (HB 4447 S-1, sponsored by Rep. Terry Brown) in restoring funds to Adult Education, Literacy and ESL programs that were targeted for over \$3 million in cuts and prevent School Aid dollars for these programs being shifted to a competitive bid process versus the current per pupil funding formula...despite one of Michigan's worst budget cycles in history. We also were able to have language removed from the originally proposed bill that was carried over from previous years that earmarked Adult Ed funds for Corrections and community colleges, putting an additional \$750,000 toward K-12 Adult Education programs.
- Testified on behalf of SB 222 sponsored by Senator John Gleason (Rep. Kate Segal on the House side) to allow public schools to become a part of local Recreational Authorities. This legislation "could provide some funding flexibility to local school districts that choose to create or join recreational authorities and levy up to one mill (with voter approval) to pay for a swimming pool, recreation center, auditorium or conference center, or park, all of which must be public facilities under the Recreational Authorities Act.
- Helped shape the discussion and development of several proposed bills that provide more flexibility for students struggling to meet the Michigan Merit Curriculum graduation requirements. As of August 19th, both the House (HB 4511 and 4410) and the Senate (SB 698) have passed their respective houses. HB 4511 (sponsored by Rep. Doug Geiss) would allow students to take advantage of a personal curriculum after completing 1.5 credits (without necessarily having attained a passing grade) of math versus the current requirement that they successfully complete 2.5 credits first. Under SB 698, a student could fulfill the Algebra II requirement by completing a formal CTE program or curriculum that was approved by the Department of Education and has embedded math content, including a program in electronics,

machining, construction, welding, engineering, or renewable energy.

Under HB 4410 (sponsored by Rep. Joel Sheltroun), students who complete at least four credits in mathematics that include one credit in algebra I, one credit in geometry earned in a geometry course or the integrated equivalent in a CTE course, and one credit earned in either a course in financial literacy or an algebra II course or the integrated equivalent in a CTE course, or an integrated sequence of this course content that consists of three credits, and an additional mathematics credit, such as trigonometry, statistics, pre-calculus, calculus, applied math, accounting, business math or algebra II, or the integrated equivalent in a CTE course. A similar bill, SB 757 was introduced by Sen. Kahn on August 19, 2009 as well.

- Worked closely with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) over the past two years in seeking a waiver to allow high school students to complete their high school graduation requirements within a 5-year cohort instead of the 4-year cohort that originally set under No Child Left Behind. Without this waiver, students who do not complete their high school graduation requirements within four years, even though they may do so in five years, are not allowed to be counted as having graduated. The cohort may be extended to six years in the future.
- Provided input to MDE on the Ed Yes! reporting requirements to more accurately report student improvement. The new reporting system, MI-SAS, that will take effect in September, 2009, recognizes academic progress in all core subjects, recognizes 5 and 6 year graduation rates as successes, and enables schools to calculate their own accreditation status.
- Teamed up with several other advocacy organizations to try to reverse proposed cuts in the Senate version of the School Aid Bill for the Great Start Readiness Program Competitive Grants. The Senate version includes only a placeholder amount of \$100 for Great Parents Great Start ISD Programs and GSRP District Grants and reduces program administration funds by \$750,000. The House version of the School Aid Bill restores cuts that were suggested by the Administration, keeping funding at the same levels as the previous year. The two versions will be taken up in Conference Committee soon to resolve the difference in the two bills. MACAE is ramping up efforts among its membership to fully restore funding for GSRP. (If you have not done so yet, please call, write or email your legislator and the Governor's office stressing your concern about proposed cuts to Great Start...and organize a letters-to-the-editor campaign within your community.)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Offered more one-day professional development opportunities (10) last school year and more people attended than in the five prior years. Despite last minute, end-of-the-year cuts in funding that MACAE anticipated receiving for adult education professional development and SB-CEU coordination with the state, the overall success and popularity of our professional development programs helped make up the difference.
- Already scheduled many of its professional development sessions for 2009-10 as well as lined up our Fall Conference Agenda with registrations underway! To learn more, check out our calendar and fall conference info at www.macaе.org

- Receive an average score for our professional development evaluations, on a scale of 1 to 5, 4.5 or higher! Congratulations to our Focus Groups and Professional Development Committee for setting the bar this past year!

NETWORKING AND ONGOING SUPPORT

- Are the only membership-driven organization that has a professionally staffed office available to trouble shoot for you all year long. Whether you are concerned with licensing questions, staffing issues, proposed legislation, funding issues, new requirements, or tracking and earning your required continuing education credits for early childhood, recreation and enrichment, alternative education, adult education, literacy or ESL, MACAE has your back. If we don't know the answer, we will do whatever is possible to find someone who does and get back to you promptly.
- Provide a forum every month of the school year through our Focus Groups on Early Childhood and Childcare, Enrichment and Recreation, Alternative Education, and Adult Education, Literacy and ESL for professionals like yourself to come together and share concerns, issues and strategies. The Focus Groups have a central role in identifying professional development needs, issues and public policy priorities for MACAE to pursue. If you want to effect change in your field, the Focus Groups are a great place to start.
- Established many strong working relationships with state agencies, the legislature and other organizations that share our mission. Representative often attend the Focus Groups, present at the board meetings and turn to MACAE when they need expertise or representation from the field. Through MACAE, you have ready access to get as engaged as time allows in shaping the future for your colleagues and students.

TIMELY UPDATES

- Help you to know what's going on in Lansing and in Washington, D.C., tracking the latest news every day. Our staff carefully tracks legislation and regulatory changes in all strand areas that fall under Community Education. We work diligently to get that information to you in a timely manner via email, our website, and now through Facebook as well.
- Respond immediately when you have a question that needs immediate feedback. We will do our best to electronically survey our membership so you can hear firsthand how your colleagues are addressing the issue.
- Post or email new reports, research, upcoming events and job openings to our members usually within 24-hours from original receipt.

NEW BENEFITS COMING THIS FALL!

- Finalizing details on home, auto and life insurance offerings that could save you and your employees hundreds of dollars a year. We hope to add health insurance to the package still this year. With the economic challenges we are facing in Michigan, any collective cost savings that we can pass on to MACAE family and friends, the better, and this is a strong start in that direction.

If I haven't convinced you yet that your investment in MACAE is well worthwhile, please give me a call at 517-706-5028! I would love to learn from you what we can do to win your support in the future!

If you like what you've read in this email and think others will like it too, please don't hesitate to forward it.

If we all pull together and do our part to ensure a strong future for programs, we can have an amazing year!!!

If you haven't renewed your membership or joined MACAE for the 2009-10 school year, a membership application has been attached, or visit www.macae.org and check out membership benefits & services. Apply today and help us swing into high gear--

My best,
Katie

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Strengthening families and communities through lifelong learning for 25 years.