



East Detroit Federation of Teachers



A Union of Professionals

December 2011 Newsletter

Local 698

A Christmas Story...sort of



'Twas the night before Christmas and all through the house, not a creature was stirring not even a mouse...I just settled down for a long winter's nap. Then Marlow's ghost visited and showed me the true nature of Christmas.

A Christmas season that brings out the best in all of us. People smile at each other on the street. We reach into our pockets to help the needy stranger.

Jimmy Stewart and a Macy's Santa are in the vision too. Our students are angels and do all their homework and pass their tests. Our evaluations reflect the true scope of our caring and helpful natures. There is Peace in the world and gas prices are under \$2 a gallon. I might even be able to retire by the time I'm 65.

Pardon the mixed metaphors and literary references, but it is Christmas and I did tell you I was settled down for a long nap. The truth of the matter is that it's been a hell of a year and we are all down. Morale is low and nobody seems to be looking to help. I'm here to tell you, "Keep the faith!"

As we prepare to rejuvenate in body and spirit over these holidays rest assured that you are still the best thing that has happened to many of these children. Even if they don't know it now, you are making a lasting positive impact on them and it will last, even if it doesn't look that way right now. It's a lot like the ground during the first snow. The early flakes don't stick on the surface, but they penetrate the ground and freeze the earth so that later snow will begin to show on the surface.

What I'm really saying is that you guys are a bunch of flakes. Wait, that's not right either. What I'm really saying is that you are great professionals and I am proud to be the leader of your union. We will make it through these difficult times. The pain of recovery is far from over. We will continue to be asked to sacrifice. We will do what we must to survive and educate these kids. We will make it out the other side. I know all these things because Marlow's ghost showed them to me in a Christmastime vision.

I will move to the New Year with a new mantra, "I had a Dream last night." Hey I've never been above stealing a good line! Happy Holidays, be safe and I'll see you in 2012.

UNION SHORTS

Recalls for Title 1 Jobs

The Board of Education approved the recall of 12 teachers and 5 paras for the second semester. They will serve as Title One instructors at Kelly and the Upper Elementary schools. The High School will get an Instructional mentor and one more K-8 instructional mentor will be added to the staff. The lower elementary buildings will get the para assistance.

These positions are related to one-time Title One grant funds and are not renewable for next school year. The positions are not expected to be available next year, although a reevaluation of the dollar allocations for Title one will examine the affect the program has on student achievement.

American Values Campaign

On December 15, 2011 the High School staff participated in the annual Family Shopping Night at EDHS. More than 300 families visited the school to shop from the many donations of clothes toys and various items donated by staff and community sponsors.

The items are all free of charge and residents can simply take what they need for their families. It is heart warming to see the appreciation these parents have knowing that they will be able to provide Christmas for their families. It is also heart wrenching to see how many families in our community are in need. Local newspapers are writing stories about our homeless problem. Our staff is doing a great job in addressing these issues every day.

Elementary Art shows great success

By Diana Moses

Congratulations to 3rd grade students, Alana Lee and Nancy Lee for their artwork that was chosen for the 2012 Environmental Calendar. Alana Lee is a student at Pleasantview and was entered into the Macomb County Public Works calendar contest by her teacher Beth Bur. Nancy Lee is a student at Bellview and was entered by her teacher Jane Walling. The students were honored at the Dec. 19 board meeting. Congratulations to Beth and Jane for creating the connection between the district's talented art students and the Eastpointe community.

High School Student wins GM scholarship

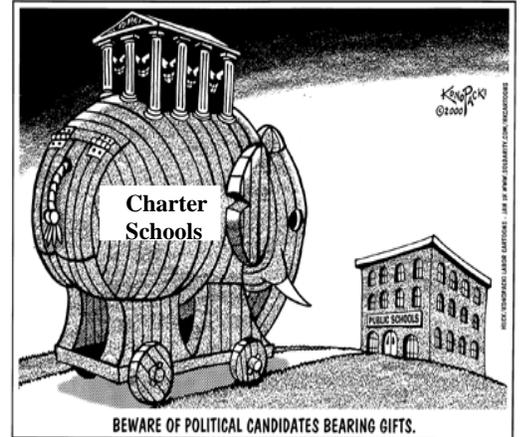
East Detroit High School senior Courtney Miller was recognized by the Board of Education for being awarded a \$1000 scholarship by the General Motors Corporation. Courtney wrote an essay on a topic that inspired her to be successful and won in competition with many students from several high schools around the Metro Detroit area. Her achievements speak well of her and the work done by the many fine teachers in the English departments throughout the district. Great job by everyone that had a part in helping her achieve success.

The Not so Funny Pages.....

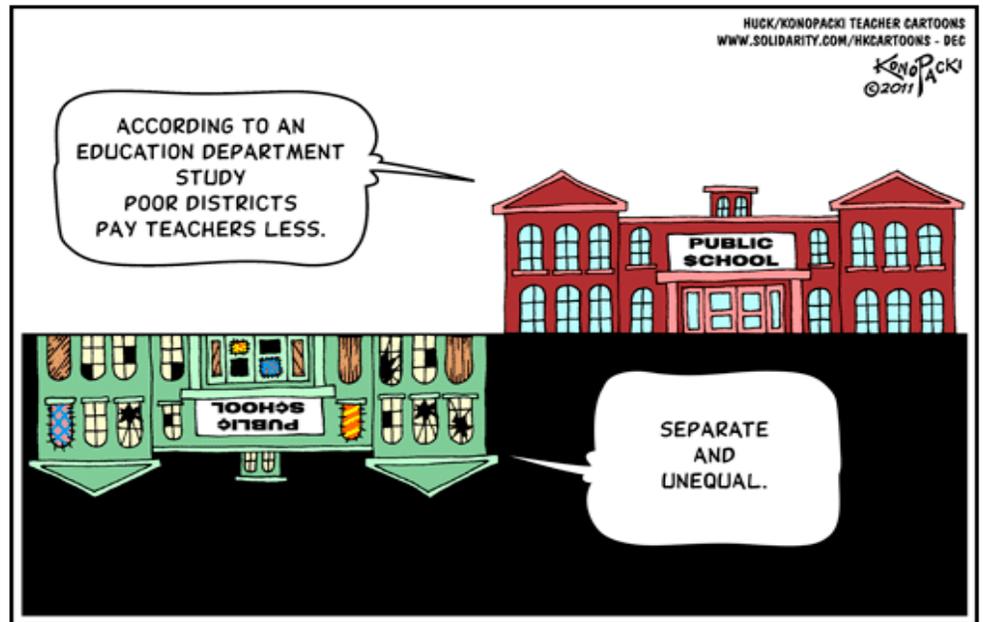
Newt and Child Labor



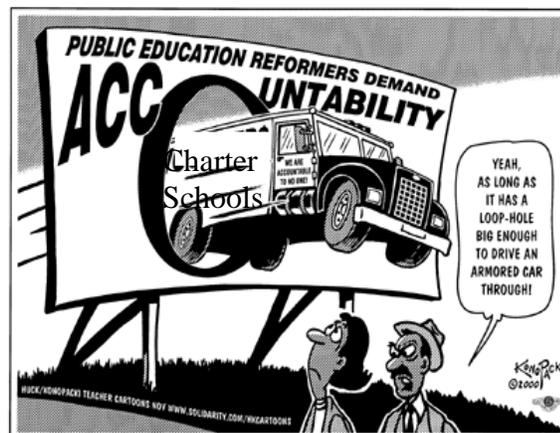
Trojan Elephant



Poor Districts and Low Paid Teachers



Accountability



NLRB Decay

