

Publications

MCEA's monthly newsletter, *Newsbrief*, provides current information on state and federal legislative activity, current issues in education, upcoming professional development opportunities, as well as in-depth articles and information relevant to urban learner success. The *Annual Report* provides a comprehensive review of the year's activities and a statistical/demographic profile of each member district. Other special publications are developed in conjunction with specific projects.

Middle Cities Risk Management Trust

An excellent example of the cooperative relationship among MCEA districts was the establishment of the MCEA risk-sharing self-insurance pool in 1987. Middle Cities Risk Management Trust provides member-run, school-based insurance programs and customized risk management services.

Middle Cities Workers' Compensation Fund

The Middle Cities Workers' Compensation Fund was established in 1993 as a state-approved group self-insurance fund which takes a proactive approach to workers' disability management. The Fund's goal is to assist member school districts in controlling workers' compensation costs, improving administration-labor relations and creating a safer work environment.

Michigan Schools Energy Cooperative (MISEC)

Formed by five major state school organizations, including MCEA, the Michigan Schools Energy Cooperative offers a collective approach to empower Michigan schools to take full advantage of cost-saving opportunities from energy deregulation.

Governance

Superintendents from MCEA school districts across the state act as the association's governing body. Key organizational decisions require a vote of a quorum of superintendents. A Board of Directors, comprised of six members, is elected for five-year staggered terms.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Member Districts

Albion	Inkster	Romulus
Battle Creek	Jackson	Saginaw
Bay City	Kalamazoo	Southfield
Beecher	Lansing	Traverse City
Benton Harbor	Monroe	Waterford
Buena Vista	Mt. Clemens	Wayne-
Ferndale	Mt. Pleasant	Westland
Flint	Muskegon	Westwood
Garden City	Muskegon Hts.	Willow Run
Grand Rapids	Niles	Ypsilanti
Hazel Park	Pontiac	
Highland Park	Port Huron	



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*Creating Opportunities
for the Urban Learner*

Mission Statement

Middle Cities Education Association is a consortium of urban school districts which was formed out of a shared commitment to improving educational opportunities for the urban learner. The unique mission and emphasis of MCEA is to serve as an advocate for member districts to insure quality educational programs for all students.

History

In 1973, MCEA was formed as a non-profit corporation with a membership of 13 districts. A formal affiliation with Michigan State University was also established at that time. Dr. C. Robert Muth was appointed executive director of MCEA and served until his retirement in 1987. Upon retiring, he established the Robert and Patricia Muth Excellence in Leadership Endowment. The endowment has provided annual leadership awards to MCEA schools that have demonstrated program excellence over the past 13 years.

Today, MCEA membership includes 33 urban school districts across Michigan which serve approximately 265,000 students in the state. Located in close proximity to the State Capitol, MCEA continues to work to create better legislative understanding and support for the needs of urban school districts.

Services

MCEA provides a number of services and activities which help member districts assure quality educational programs for all students.

- Professional development training and support for district administrators, principals and teachers
- Cooperative forum for member district administrators through a comprehensive task force structure
- Liaison with the Legislature and state agencies
- Relevant statistical data, information and publications

- Enrollment projection services
- Conferences, workshops and meetings on current issues in education
- Urban learner resource library
- Web site which provides up-to-date information, connections and networking
- Research and program development through collaborative efforts with colleges of education, state agencies and other education organizations
- Property, liability and workers' compensation self-insurance pools
- Energy cooperative to take advantage of cost saving opportunities from energy deregulation

Task Forces

MCEA Task Forces are a key vehicle for communication, leadership, mentoring, shaping direction and networking. The task forces, each with representation from the member districts, meet monthly during the school year to focus on their areas of specialization and promote success among urban learners. They are assisted by MCEA staff who facilitate their efforts. The task forces play a key role in state and federal policy matters and often meet jointly to work on issues of common concern.

Building Professional Capacity

MCEA provides all staff in member districts with a wide variety of opportunities for professional development and networking. For critical issues related to urban learner success, we focus on the use of partnerships, processes and tools that allow buildings and districts to analyze current practice and develop plans for improvement. MCEA provides time and a place to consider the confluence of local, state and national resources to support school improvement. Based on member districts' stated concerns, we pursue resources to address these concerns. MCEA specifically supports the investigation of ways to use information technologies in managing the tasks of administrators and teachers; and is active in statewide continuous improvement initiatives to provide technical assistance to schools.

Government Relations

In its government liaison role, MCEA works to create a better understanding of and support for the needs of urban school districts. MCEA staff monitor state and federal legislation and programs and provide information on the latest developments affecting member districts. MCEA coordinates responses to current issues and legislation and develops and promotes new policy to better serve the needs of urban students. A number of MCEA representatives serve on state policy committees and advisory groups, affording Middle Cities direct input into state policy making.

Online Resources

The MCEA web site, www.middlecities.org, provides direct, timely access to information and resources provided by the association. The web site includes an updated calendar of events; contact information on all task force members; extensive member district statistical data, including MEAP scores; timely legislative updates; the monthly publication *Newsbrief*; dozens of links to other helpful resources online; a wide variety of school improvement tools; the Urban Learner Resource Library, including online ordering; and much more.

Affiliation

Although MCEA is no longer housed at Michigan State University, our affiliation with MSU continues to facilitate the implementation of educational theory and research into practice in public schools throughout Michigan.