



Teachers union spends \$1M on Michigan governor's race

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The Michigan Education Association is crying foul over advocates who are funding the Let MI Kids Learn initiative that would give parents a voice in their child's education.

Yet the MEA, along with its parent organization, the National Education Association, is heavily funding Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's reelection campaign, as well as some Michigan school board races. The NEA is spending \$1 million in Whitmer's favor.

The MEA is also endorsing nearly 200 candidates in local school board races and giving more than \$1,000 each to many candidates across the state. This amount goes a long way in local school board elections. The NEA and MEA are supporting candidates who will back the status quo.

Corey DeAngelis is a senior fellow at the American Federation for Children, an adjunct scholar at the Cato Institute, and a leader in the pro-choice movement in education. He questions whether union money will help candidates, likening it to a "kiss of death."

"An endorsement by these power-hungry teachers unions should be the political kiss of death after these past two and a half years," DeAngelis told CapCon. "Whitmer is now downplaying her role in school closures – and even lied about it during the final gubernatorial debate by saying 'kids were out [of school] for three months.'"

DeAngelis noted Whitmer's choice of campaign surrogates.

"Whitmer even had Randi Weingarten — arguably the most disliked union boss of our time — opening for her on Saturday. It looks like Michigan Democrats didn't learn anything from Virginia. Gretchen Whitmer is the new Terry McAuliffe."

Paula J. Herbart, MEA president, did not respond to a request for comment.

Teachers unions have been active in school board races for years, according to Jarret Skorup, director of marketing and communications at the Mackinac Center.

Skorup wrote in a commentary published by The Hill that the same media outlets that hardly mention this are critical of conservative parents and groups when they become involved in the school elections.

The Washington Examiner reported April 7 that the NEA spent \$66 million on political activities and another \$117 million on political contributions, gifts, and grants for the 2020-21 reporting cycle. MEA's total spending for 2022 is not yet available.