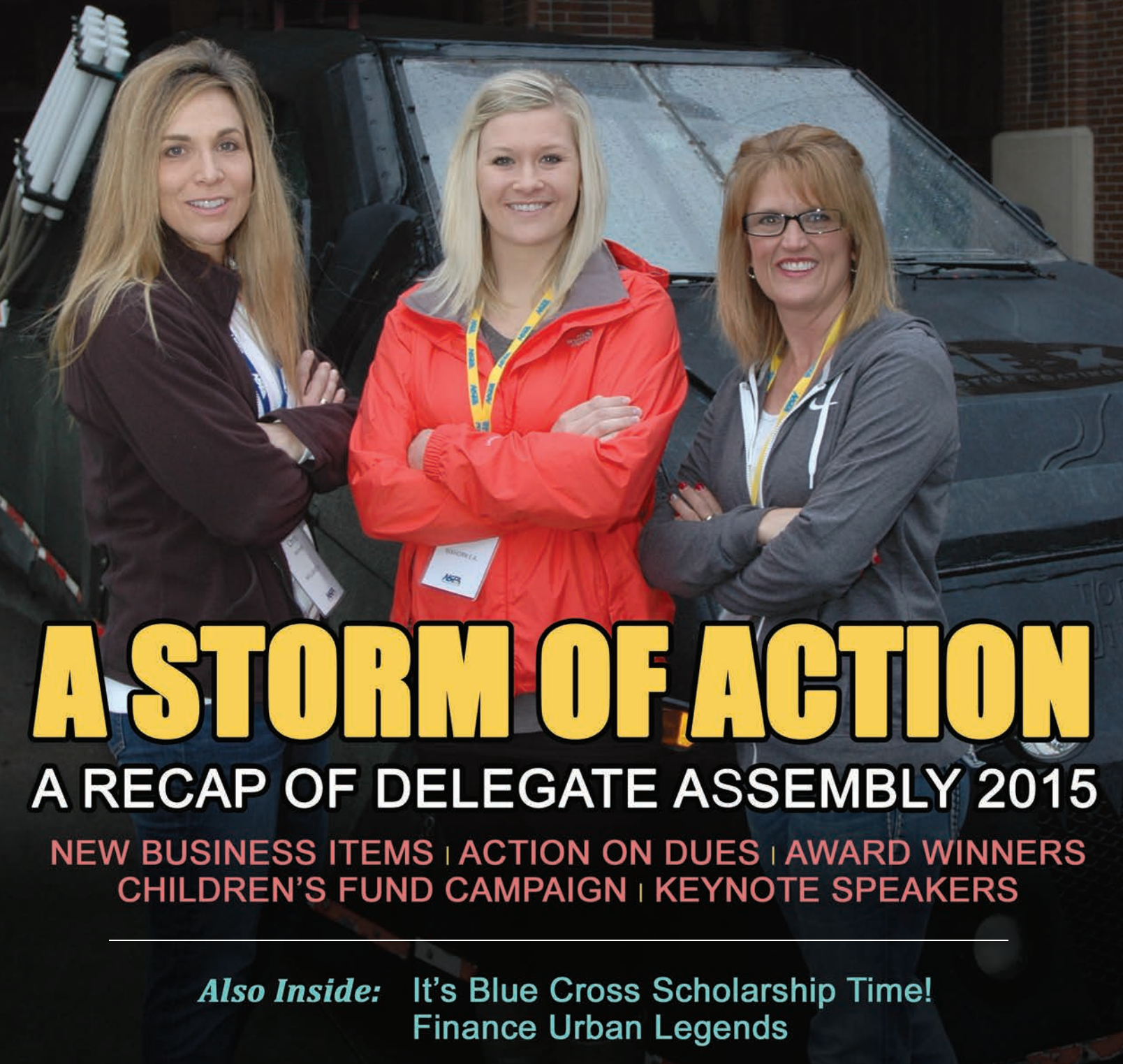


THE

VOICE

The Nebraska State Education Association ❖ May 2015



A STORM OF ACTION

A RECAP OF DELEGATE ASSEMBLY 2015

NEW BUSINESS ITEMS | ACTION ON DUES | AWARD WINNERS
CHILDREN'S FUND CAMPAIGN | KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Also Inside: It's Blue Cross Scholarship Time!
Finance Urban Legends



Honorees: Papillion-LaVista Education Association's Andy Isaacson and Amy Himes, left, accepted the Children's fund Helping Hands Award at Delegate Assembly for the local association collecting the most cash for the Children's Fund. Sue Brodersen, above, accepted on behalf of the Hartington-Newcastle Education Association for collecting the most cash, on average, per member.



Get Top Notch NSEA Training this Summer

Leadership Institute Gets Rave Reviews

There is still time to register for a top-notch summer training from NSEA — but time is running short!

NSEA's annual Leadership Institute has gotten rave reviews over the years.



For instance, last year's evaluation resulted in this response from a participant:

"This was a great experience for me. I learned so much and am feeling very motivated to go back and make a change in our local's participation."

The expense paid, three-and-one-half-day training set June 8-11 at NSEA gives new and potential leaders deep insight into NSEA operations, and helps develop leadership qualities in participants.

As a bonus, participants connect with other leaders from across the state.

Members interested in participation can make their intentions known by contacting NSEA's Kristen Sedlacek or Jan Anderson at 1-800-742-0047 or at:

kristen.sedlacek@nsea.org
jan.anderson@nsea.org

\$15K Raised for Children's Fund

When the call went out for help, NSEA members responded.

Twenty years after it was founded, the need has never been greater. Earlier this year, the NSEA's Children's Fund found itself in need of financial help. A campaign called 20/20 Vision for the Children's Fund was organized, and members delivered nearly \$15,000 by the time NSEA's Delegate Assembly had ended. The goal was \$10,000.

"I am very proud of how members turned out to help the Children's Fund,"

said NSEA President Nancy Fulton.

Since 1994, the Children's Fund has met the modest needs of Nebraska public school students who are in need, whether that need is caused by poverty, divorce, natural disaster or other causes.

From eyeglasses, to warm clothing, food or medical assistance, the Children's Fund has stepped in to help kids across the state.

For details, reach NSEA's Sally Bodtke at 1-800-742-0047 or at:

sally.bodtke@nsea.org

Cover Story:

Standing before The Dominator, the heavy-duty vehicle that drives into tornadoic weather, are NSEA members Chris Janovec, Millard; and Amie Pleskac and Suzy Renken, Elkhorn. The trio were among attendees at Delegate Assembly, which featured storm chaser Reed Timmer and a storm of activity. For details, turn to

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Great Public Schools For Every Child

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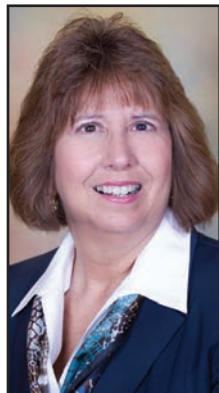
Payment of annual NSEA dues entitles Nebraska educators to receive The Voice. Cost of producing 10 issues of The Voice each year is \$3.41 per member.

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Cited for excellence each year by the State Education Editors, including these 2013 awards: Best Magazine, Best News Story, Best Feature Story, Best Photography and Best Editorial Design.



This is Our Chance



**NSEA President
Nancy Fulton**

“
We must get
it right this time
for the students
under the age
of 25 who
have known no
other system
than NCLB —
and for those
students yet to
come.

“It is doubtful that any child may reasonably be expected to succeed in life if he is denied the opportunity of an education. Such an opportunity where the state has undertaken to provide it, is a right which must be made available to all on equal terms.”

So said the U.S. Supreme Court in the game-changing 1954 ruling now known as *Brown v. Board of Education*.

A few short years later came another game-changer: Fifty years ago, on April 11, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The original ESEA bill had whizzed through Congress in less than 100 days, an amazing feat, considering the speed at which current legislation moves through our federal government today. ESEA significantly expanded the federal government’s role in K-12 education, in particular with the inception of the Title 1 program, aimed at helping school districts cover the cost of educating the nation’s poorest and most disadvantaged students. When announcing his plan, President Johnson said “Poverty must not be a bar to learning, and learning must offer an escape from poverty.”

Creativity Impossible

Nearly four decades and more than a half a dozen revisions later, President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), reauthorizing and overhauling ESEA. The Bush version had the overwhelming bipartisan support of Congress. NCLB significantly expanded the annual testing requirements and gave the federal government authority over how states measured student achievement and interventions for schools that failed to make sufficient progress. It was never meant that NCLB would live for 13 years without an update – a far longer shelf life than any previous version of ESEA. Sadly, it has survived unchanged, even though it is clear that NCLB has failed to improve schools and has shown no significant progress in closing achievement and opportunity gaps.

While the original purpose of ESEA, and then NCLB, was to help level the playing field for our nation’s most vulnerable students, for students living in poverty, for students with disabilities and for English-language learners, that has not been the result. Under No Child Left Behind, the focus shifted

from student learning and opportunity towards testing, labeling, and even punishment of the educators and schools serving our most defenseless students. In reality, NCLB has made it impossible to do what we do best: use our talents to be creative, to teach and to inspire our students to love learning.

Core Principles

Today, NCLB is long overdue for a major rewrite. For eight years lawmakers and the White House have been at impasse in efforts to write a successor version of NCLB. On the House of Representatives side, the NCLB update (HR 5) is stalled. The Senate’s version, called the Every Child Achieves Act of 2015, was passed out of a Senate committee unanimously. It is anticipated to reach the full Senate floor for debate soon.

You should know that NEA has worked hard to ensure that three core principles are included in the next reauthorization of ESEA:

- The reauthorization must ensure that all students have a caring, fully qualified, and committed teacher, requiring states to focus on the entire spectrum of teacher recruitment, professional development, and retention that is available to every student in every ZIP code.
- The reauthorization must give students more time to learn by addressing the amount of federally-mandated standardized testing. The final version must decouple the use of standardized tests from high-stakes decision making.
- The new version must create an accountability system that advances opportunities and excellence for all students.

Those Yet to Come

This could be the year that meaningful improvements are (finally!) made to the fatally flawed law that is NCLB. Please take a minute to contact your congressman and urge action in the best interests of students and America’s future. As you contact your representative, identify yourself as an educator: we must make sure that reauthorization reflects the input of trusted education professionals like yourself.

This is our chance; this is a chance for our students. We must get it right this time for the students under the age of 25 who have known no other system than NCLB – and for those students yet to come.

Finding Nebraska’s Great Public Schools (GPS)



NSEA locals from around the state appear or are mentioned in this issue. Look for:

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LexingtonPage 7
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South Sioux CityPage 8
University of Nebraska-KearneyPage 23
Westside District 66Page 12

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Measuring What Matters

NSEA Makes a Difference in Your Classroom

Every month during the 2014-15 Association year, the For all it's Worth series provides easy-to-access information about your NSEA membership. Throughout the school year, you will receive monthly membership editions via email, highlighting three key areas: Membership Benefits, Working Conditions and Action & Advocacy.

In regards to Action & Advocacy, we all know that well-designed assessment plays a critical role in student success. Teachers use these assessments to improve their practice and provide extra help to the students who need it.

But today's students are being over-tested. From federally-mandated testing to state and local assessments, it's not just students that feel the burdens and stresses of high-stakes standardized assessments – parents and educators also feel its stresses.

Reducing the Amount of Testing

The consequences for teaching and



learning are real. Students and teachers continue to lose more and more class time to testing and test preparation. Time that should be spent teaching and learning a rich, engaging curriculum. With your association membership, you can help shift this high emphasis on testing back to teaching and learning. Your membership is a ticket to A+ opportunities, resources, and connections, including a professional network that is more than 3 million members strong. It provides a unified voice and a powerful platform that enable changing the landscape of today's testing mania.

You and your colleagues know what policymakers do not — reducing the amount of standardized testing would:

- Create more time for instruction to promote critical thinking skills, foster a love of learning and creativity, and improve student achievement;

- Provide educators and schools the flexibility to strengthen and broaden the curricula; and

- Help focus on areas critical to student success, such as class sizes that enable teachers to connect one-on-one with each student, adequate school funding and time for teachers to collaborate with their colleagues.

Watch for news and updates from the For all it's Worth series in your email inbox, on Facebook and online at:

nsea.org

Time for TOY Perhaps You Are Nebraska's Next Teacher of the Year

If you are open to challenges, and are dedicated to teaching, you'll want to give serious consideration to applying to become Nebraska's next Teacher of the Year.

The recipient is a spokesperson for education, travels the state and nation, and receives numerous gifts and recognitions.

Since 1972, the Nebraska Teacher of the Year program has recognized outstanding Nebraska certified teachers working in a pre-kindergarten through grade 12 classroom setting, and who plan to continue in an active teacher status in a state-approved or accredited school.

Questions on the application form seek details on educational background and personal development, community involvement, philosophy of teaching and learning, and the teaching profession from the viewpoint of the applicant.

Finalists will be interviewed in October. An awards luncheon and reception will be held at NSEA headquarters in November.

SMART Technologies provides the recipient a package of hardware and software for classroom use. Cash and other assorted gifts add to the value of the title. The program receives financial support from The Sherwood Foundation, Union Bank & Trust Co., the Nebraska Academy of Sciences and ConAgra Foods Foundation.

The program will accept applications through midnight on Aug. 7. The application is on the Department of Education website, and can be completed electronically. Copies will be mailed to individuals who request them.

For details, call Lora Sypal at the Nebraska Department of Education, 402-471-5059. The application can also be found at: www.education.ne.gov/

NSEA Seeking Applicants for Field Staff Opening

The NSEA is seeking applicants for an opening on the Association's 18-member field staff, known as organizational specialists. Here is the job listing, with contact details and deadlines:

— FIELD REPRESENTATIVE —

Organizational Specialist, Nebraska State Education Association. The Organizational Specialist serves as an advocate of the Nebraska State Education Association, the National Education Association and as a consultant to local associations and

individual members of the United Education Profession. The primary responsibility of the Organizational Specialist is to help locals build organizational capacity through training and support in the operational areas of advocacy, bargaining, political action, communication, membership development, governance and instructional advocacy. Bachelor's degree required, Public Education or Organizing experience preferred. Send Résumé and cover letter to Neal Clayburn, Associate Executive Director (electronic submission preferred), neal.clayburn@nsea.org, 605 S. 14 St., Lincoln, NE 68508. Applications due no later than May 31, 2015.

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The Honoree: Juan Guzman of the Office of Multicultural Affairs at the University of Nebraska-Kearney had a host of friends congratulate him after his office was honored with NSEA’s Great Plains Milestone Award at NSEA’s Delegate Assembly. From left are Karla Andazola, Lexington; Guzman; Manny Andazola, Lexington; Jose Hernandez, Norfolk; Edward Ventura Jr., Tracy Hartman-Bradley and Susan Loney, Omaha.

Nebraska Loves Public Schools!

NSEA Returns The Love With Friend of Education Award

Members Call for Action on Class Size

The NSEA has given Nebraska Loves Public Schools its highest honor, the 2015 Friend of Education Award.

The nearly 300 teachers and education support professionals attending NSEA’s 154th Delegate Assembly applauded the Nebraska Loves Public Schools organization for telling good stories about public schools.

Delegates also voted overwhelmingly to ask state lawmakers to study the issue of class size and consider financial incentives for school districts to keep class size at an appropriate student/teacher ratio as recommended by research.

The Legislature repealed incentives in state aid for smaller elementary class size four years ago under the assumption that school districts had already addressed the issue and included funding for lower pupil teacher ratios in annual budgets. Tighter budgets in many districts, however, have led to higher class sizes in recent years.

Delegates also:

- Directed NSEA to study and report on the pitfalls of school districts leaving the NSEA-led Educators Health Alliance plan that provides health insurance for all but three Nebraska school districts.

- Defeated a proposal to raise dues an \$7, rather than the board-recommended \$3, in order to keep NSEA fully staffed.

- Defeated a bid to give ethnic minority members a voting seat on the NSEA

Board of Directors.

- Defeated an effort to give retired and student members a vote on the status Nebraska’s junior NEA director.

- Defeated a proposal to study – and report back in 2016 – the feasibility of creating a full-time release, paid Association vice president position. The NSEA Board of Directors has discussed creation of such a position for several months.

- Agreed to study NSEA’s governance structure (see page 9).

Delegates heard Dr. Earl Wiman, a member of the National Education Association Executive Committee, urge members to continue to “stand up to the stupid and crazy and their ‘so-called’ education reforms and beliefs.”

One Target in Mind

Wiman said NSEA members have united to encourage the Legislature to defeat corporate school legislation, have said ‘no’ to linking student test scores to teacher evaluations, and are working to defeat LB288, which would silence the NSEA by taking away the right to pay dues through payroll deduction.

“The stupid and crazy would silence the voice of those who work in our schools, when now more than ever it is about our voice, the voice of the practitioner, the voice of all of us engaged in public education,” he said.

Attacks on public education have one target, he said: privatizing the \$635 billion spent annually on public schools.

“Public education is the last big pot of government money that has not been privatized,” he said, citing that U.S. Department of Defense Schools in Germany are guarded by private security forces.

They want, said Wiman, to apply a



A Friend to Education: President Nancy Fulton presents NSEA’s highest honor, the 2015 Friend of Education Award, to Nebraska Loves Public Schools’ Sally Nelson Barrett. The organization exists to create videos that tell the stories of the good work going on in Nebraska public schools. Barrett told delegates ‘This is our Academy Award!’



Teaching Excellence
NEA Director Deb Gnuse presented the 2015 Teaching Excellence Award to Linda Freye of the Lincoln Education Association.



ESP of the Year
Nebraska NEA Director John Heineman presented the Education Support Professional of the Year Award to Jeri Bowman of South Sioux City.



Rookie of the Year
Nebraska NEA Director Deb Gnuse presented the 2015 Rookie of the Year Award to Lewiston Education Association member Devin Garcia.



Great Plains Award
NEA Director John Heineman presented the Great Plains Award to Juan Guzman, representing the Office of Multicultural Affairs at the University of Nebraska-Kearney.



Community Service
South Sioux City Education Association's Tracia Blom accepts the Community Service Award from NSEA Vice President Jenni Benson on behalf of the South Sioux City Middle School staff.

“corporate business model” to American public education.

“NSEA, NEA, together and united: we must work to stop the stupid and the crazy,” said Wiman.

Friend of Education

Nebraska Loves Public Schools is dedicated to a campaign that highlights issues facing students and public schools in Nebraska and elsewhere. Through videos, it shares these stories and, to date, has created thousands of hours of footage, nearly three dozen short films and nearly a dozen television shows. The films have been recognized by the Webby Awards and nominated as an official selection for the PovertyCure International Short Film Festival.

“Thank you so much for this honor. This is our Academy Award,” said Sally Nelson Barrett, director of Nebraska Loves Public Schools.

The NLPS videos and other work, frequently featuring NSEA members, can be seen online, at:

nelovesps.org/

Members also honored Lewiston Public Schools science teacher Devin Garcia as the 2015 Rookie of the Year; Lincoln Public Schools kindergarten teacher Linda Freye as the 2015 Teaching Excellence Award winner; and South Sioux City’s Jeri Bowman as Educational Support Professional of the Year. The Great Plains Milestone Award went to the Office of Multicultural Affairs at the University of Nebraska-Kearney. The Community Service Award went to the South Sioux City Middle School teachers.

Class Sizes Concern

Grand Island’s Michelle Carter proposed NSEA urge the Legislature study and act on class size, and said the study would dovetail with a proposed addition to NSEA’s Standing Resolutions, which passed later in the assembly. The Resolution states that “Class size maximums must be based

on the type of students, grade level, subject area content, and physical facilities.”

Carter said that “Common sense tells us — and research confirms — that the number of students in a class can make a real difference for students and teachers alike. The proven long-term benefits of reducing class sizes achievement gains and higher graduation rates — should make this a priority.”

Carter said she teachers 27 children in a classroom built for 20, and said large class size brings “all kinds of issues.

“The heart of the matter is that I cannot do my best for every child with 27 kids in my classroom,” said Carter.

Bylaw Proposals Fail

A proposal to change NSEA Bylaws to give ethnic minority members a voting seat on the NSEA Board of Directors received 58 percent of votes, falling short of the two-thirds majority required for adoption. Lincoln Education Association member Rita Bennett spoke in favor, and said “It is incumbent upon us to reflect the diversity that we are so proud of in our classrooms.”

Lexington’s Diana Rodas opposed, and said minority members can be elected to the board as active members of the Association.

“You are not giving ethnic minorities a new position,” said Rodas. “You are further segregating ethnic minorities.”

A second proposal, to allow members of the student and retired affiliates to vote on the Association’s junior NEA Director’s status as a voting member of the NSEA Board of Directors failed, with 29 percent of the vote.

Dues Increase

Intertwined in debate on 2015-16 dues was a discussion on staffing.

The NSEA Board of Directors proposed a \$3 dues increase, which will require a reduction of a one member of NSEA’s



Storm ahead! There’s not really a storm on the horizon, but storm chaser extraordinaire and Delegate Assembly speaker Reed Timmer was on the watch for bad weather with Millard Education Association members Traci Gemberling, left, and Deanna Kuhn.

professional staff. A field staff vacancy caused by an August retirement has not been filled, and tentative plans are to fill that spot yet this year by cutting another professional staff position.

Tentative plans would eliminate the instructional advocacy position and the work of that employee to the duties of other NSEA staffers.

Delegates from the southeast part of the state who have been without a full-time field representative since the retirement, and some delegates who sympathized with that region's plight, proposed an additional \$4 increase to support full staffing.

Invoking Earl Wiman's words from the previous night, Palmyra's Burke Brown said full staffing was essential in the fight "versus the stupid and crazy." Brown said his "first line of defense" is to reach out to NSEA staff.

Grand Island's John LeCompte said "cheaper is not better," and called a \$7 dues increase "reasonable."

Others argued that the dues amount has been cited by non-members as a reason for declining to join, and that dues must be kept in line to stem recent membership losses.

The proposal to raise dues by \$7 failed on a voice vote, and the \$3 increase, from \$381 to \$384 (.078 percent) was approved.

Vice Presidential Study

Delegates also turned back a New Business Item to study, for the next year, a proposal to create a full-time, paid vice president position. NSEA Board of Directors member ML Lehman, ESU No. 16, offered the plan.

"A decision of this magnitude needs to be made by delegates," she said.

Board member Maddie Fennell, Omaha, said the proposal would only delay work that needs to be done. She said the position may be a part-time release, and that the vice president duties would include assistance with targeted organizing and governance training.

Lehman's proposal failed narrowly.

EHA Effects

Delegates approved a recommendation from the Ad Hoc Committee on Board Structure to study NSEA's governance structure. The committee said the current model has remained unchanged for decades, and that a review would examine whether the structure continues to meet member needs.

At the urging of Papillion-LaVista member Dave Herbener, delegates also approved a New Business Item directing the Association to study and report in *The Voice* on the consequences of local associations leaving the Educators Health Alliance health insurance plan.

Herbener said his local was pressured in the last round of negotiations to leave the EHA.

"If a local elects to drop EHA, what are the implications?" said Herbener. "We don't see the logic of leaving a 77,000 member (insurance) pool for a 3,000 member pool. We feel NSEA needs to promote the facts and evidence."

The proposal was approved on a voice vote.

Next on the NSEA Agenda

Board Structure, Class Size Issues Adopted

Members at NSEA's annual Delegate Assembly considered six New Business Items, which direct completion of specified projects in the next year. Five of the six were approved.

NBI No. 1: Governance (passed)

The NSEA president will appoint an ad hoc committee from active, retired, and student members to review the Governance structure of the NSEA Board of Directors and of the NSEA Governance Districts. For each of the

NSEA governance boards, this committee will examine all aspects of the governance levels, including but not limited to: number of governance districts, number of members of governance level boards; membership representation on the governance board; voting rights on the governance board; structure of the governance board; officers of the governance board; purpose and expectations of the governance board; and relationships with other NSEA

groups. A preliminary report will be presented to the 2016 NSEA Delegate Assembly for consideration. (Submitted by the Ad Hoc Committee on Board Structure)

NBI No. 2: Class Size (passed)

NSEA's Government Relations Team shall develop and cause to have introduced an interim study resolution and legislation to reduce class size. The legislation may include financial incentives for school districts to keep class size at the appropriate student/teacher ratios as recommended by research. The Legislature repealed incentives in state aid for smaller elementary class size four years ago under the assumption that school districts had already addressed the issue and included funding for lower pupil teacher ratios in their annual budgets. (Submitted by Michelle Carter, Grand Island Education Association)

NBI No. 3: EHA Facts (passed)

NSEA shall investigate and report on the potential repercussions of school districts leaving the EHA (e.g., cost, benefits, and potential implications for members as well as the EHA). NSEA shall provide its findings to local presidents and chief negotiators via email and shall inform the general membership through publication of an article in the *NSEA Voice* magazine. (Submitted by Dave Herbener, Papillion-LaVista Education Association)

NBI No. 4: Vice President (failed)

NSEA Delegate Assembly directs the Board of Directors to complete its study on the feasibility of a paid, full-time release NSEA Vice President. At the 2016 DA, the results of this study shall be reported, and any recommended action shall be brought to the Delegates for approval. (Submitted by ML Lehman, ESU No. 16 Education Association)

NBI No. 5: CHI Mediation (passed)

The president of the NSEA shall write a letter to the executives of both CHI health and BCBS of Nebraska urging the two parties to agree to enter a mediation process to resolve the disagreement between the two parties regarding CHI being an in network health provider for BCBS of Nebraska. (Submitted by John LeCompte, Grand Island Education Association)

NBI No. 6: RA Delegates (passed)

Direct the NSEA Board of Directors to determine the appropriate Board committee to discuss cluster delegates and ways to help more cluster delegates attend NEA Representative Assembly. (Submitted by NSEA Vice President Jenni Benson, Lincoln Education Association)

Wanted! Volunteers for Governance Study

NSEA members at Delegate Assembly voted overwhelmingly to approve New Business Item No. 1, a study of the Association's governance structures.

NSEA President Nancy Fulton hopes to appoint a committee of a broad cross section of members to study the Association's governance and to make recommendations for consideration at the 2016 NSEA Delegate Assembly.

If interested, contact Fulton directly at 1-800-742-0047, or at:

nancy.fulton@nsea.org

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ART 899P-01	ST: Museum Seminar	HIST 848-03	Readings in American History: Frontier Law & Order	TE 845-01	Contemporary Theory & Practice in Reading
BIOL 820-01	Introduction to Graduate Study	HIST 848-04	Readings in American History: Popular Music	TE 848-01	Assessment & Remediation in Elementary School Mathematics
BIOL 829-01	Ecological Anthropology	HIST 848-05	Readings in American History: Civil Rights	TE 850-01	Elementary School Curriculum
BIOL 830P-01	ST: Bioethics of Hela Cells	HIST 848-06	Readings in American History: Slavery	TE 853C-01	Improvement of Instruction in Elementary School Language Arts
BIOL 830P-02	ST: Immunology	HIST 848-07	Readings in American History: The Populist Movement	TE 853D-01	Improvement of Instruction in Elementary School Science
BIOL 831A-01	Biological Research: Hypothesis & Justification	HIST 848-08	Readings in American History: The 1970s	TE 853F-01	Improving Mathematics Instruction for Grades PK-2
BIOL 831B-01	Biological Research: Methodology	HIST 848-09	Readings in American History: Rise of Urban America	TE 854-01	Reading in the Content Areas
BIOL 831C-01	Biological Research: Annotated Bibliography	HIST 849-01	Readings in World History: The Holocaust	TE 857-01	Early Communication, Language & Literacy
BIOL 831D-01	Biological Research: Data Collection	HIST 849-02	Readings in World History: Medieval England	TE 868	Copyright, Fair Use, & Ethics (2 sections)
BIOL 831E-01	Biological Research: Statistical Analysis	HIST 849-03	Readings in World History: Cold War Eastern Europe	TE 869-01	Introduction to School Library Program
BIOL 831F-01	Biological Research: Manuscript	HIST 849-04	Readings in World History: Medieval Warfare	TE 872-01	Organization of School Library & Technology Resources
BIOL 832-01	Crane Ecology	HIST 895P-01	TS: The 1960s	TE 873-01	Reference Services & Resources
BIOL 834-01	Conservation Biology	HIST 895P-02	TS: World Wars & Historical Memory	TE 876-01	Integration of Curriculum, Technology & Media Resources
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BIOL 858-01	Physiology of Stress	MIS 802-01	Management Information Systems Seminar	TE 897-01	Seminar in Education
BIOL 862P-01	Animal Behavior	MKT 830P-01	International Marketing	TE 899P-01	ST: Learning & Teaching Together
BIOL 863	Biological Perspectives (2 sections)	MUS 800-01	Foundations of Music Education	TE 899P-02	ST: Improving Mathematics Instruction in Grades 4-8
BIOL 881	Current Issues in Biology (3 sections)	MUS 814-01	Aesthetics of Music	TE 899P-03	ST: Teacher Leadership
BIOL 887-01	Fisheries Ecology	MUS 851-01	History of Romantic Music	TESE 821P-01	Nature & Needs of Exceptionalities
CHEM 805-01	Chemical Management & Safety for High School Teachers	PE 801P-01	Psychology of Sport	TESE 824-01	Identification, Assessment, & Evaluation for Gifted/Talented Education
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Master Teacher, Tuition Bills Move

Two Years in the Making, Educator Evaluation Plan Advancing at Snail's Pace Meanwhile, LB288 Still Alive

Now that the Nebraska Legislature has passed the two-thirds marker of the 2015 session, there is an abundance of great news for educators.

There is also a smidgen of not-so-good news.

On one hand, funding for the state's tuition reimbursement plan for teachers appears headed for approval. Senators have also included \$470,000 in the tentative budget for the long-ago approved, but never-funded, Master Teacher Program.

Senators have also advanced funding that will support two long years of intensive work by NSEA members and the Nebraska Department of Education to develop educator and administrator evaluation models for the state's school districts. In that work, NSEA and the NDE have facilitated and monitored evaluation pilot projects in 17 school districts.

Meanwhile, the line item for state aid to schools appears set to increase, from \$933 million to \$973 million, in 2015-16. That increase, however, won't mean more cash flowing into every school district's coffers. Tentative numbers show distinct winners and distinct losers in the state aid race, with districts seeing a downturn in state aid outnumbering those with increases by a two-to-one margin.

What senators have yet to do, however, is put a spike through the onerous LB288, a direct attack on your association and association rights in general. Offered by Crete Sen. Laura Ebke, and co-sponsored by Bellevue Sen. Tommy Garrett, LB288 singles out and denies public school employees the right to have association dues deducted from their paycheck.

Following a long line of opponents testifying against the bill before the Legislature's Business and Labor Committee, Ebke was the lone speaker in favor of LB288. Yet LB288 remains alive and a threat to your personal freedom.

Another threat to public schools has been turned back. O'Neill Sen. Tyson Larson's bill to allow and fund corporate schools, LB616, has been indefinitely postponed – killed – by senators.

Evaluation Plan Advances

A set of new educator and administrator evaluation models, originally ensconced in LB239, was amended into LB525 before the Education Committee advanced it to the full legislature in late April.



Expertise at the Capitol: Westside Education Association's Michael Fryda, left, and retired North Bend Education Association member Bob Feurer, right, testified before the Education Committee in March, urging senators to give teachers more time to teach. Both Fryda and Feurer are former Nebraska Teachers of the Year.

NSEA has worked with policymakers, the Nebraska Department of Education and 17 school districts over the past two years to develop and test drive these models for evaluations.

After reports on the pilot projects are filed and vetted this summer, the State Board of Education is expected to approve the models for school districts to consider for implementation. The legislation provides grant monies to assist in implementation.

LB525 would also provide the NDE with funding for a coordinator who would work with schools, educational service units, postsecondary educational institutions and others to develop and make available the evaluation models; to provide training for implementation; and to facilitate data collection.

The grant money will come from income from solar and wind agreements on school lands.

More Tuition Reimbursement Aid

Educators can soon look forward to more help through the Enhancing Excellence in Teaching Program, the state's tuition reimbursement program.

The NSEA-supported LB589, offered by Lincoln Sen. Patty Pansing Brooks, provides \$1.2 million in funding in each of the next five years.

LB589 would expand the EETP to include endorsement programs such as early childhood, special education, career academy/dual credit endorsements and other shortage area endorsements. In 2014-15, the EETP provided 830 loans to teachers and students.

LB589 has been amended into LB519 and has advanced



to Final Reading.

Master Teacher Bill May Be Funded – Finally!

Through LB185, offered by Lincoln Sen. Kate Bolz, the Appropriations Committee has included \$470,000 for the Master Teacher Program in its preliminary budget proposal.

It's about time!

The Master Teacher Program was passed by the Legislature in 2000, but thanks to an economic downturn that quickly followed, was never funded. The program offers incentives for teachers to obtain National Board Certification. If approved, LB185 would provide scholarships for National Board Certification application fees and additional pay of up to \$5,000 annually for teachers who earn certification.

LB185 was introduced at NSEA's urging.

Time to Teach, Learn

The Time to Teach and Time to Learn Act would use \$15 million to reduce class size across the state and another \$10 million for instructional time grants for equalized and non-equalized school districts. Proposed by Omaha Sen. Tanya Cook, LB435 is the probable subject of an Interim Study.

Omaha Retirement System

A bill (LB447) to strengthen the Omaha Schools Employee Retirement System (OSERS) has been amended into LB448. The plan will result in a 7-member OSERS board, with a majority of those board members employees contributing to the plan. Investment decisions will be transferred to the State Investment Council, and pension benefits for new OPS hires after July 1 will mirror the benefits of new hires in the state school retirement plan. LB448 is the Retirement Committee's priority bill.

State Aid Review

LB323, despite 36 co-sponsors, remains in committee. The bill would create a broad committee of stakeholders to study the financing of public schools – state aid – and make recommendations to the Legislature. Education Committee Chair Sen. Kate Sullivan has proposed a competing resolution, LR 201, to create an interim review of state funding by a committee of state senators.

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COU 601W	Ethical Guidelines-Schl Cnslrs	1	4/27/2015	6/19/2015	ONLINE			Ponec
COU 602W	Intro ASCA Model Schl Counslng	1	4/27/2015	6/19/2015	ONLINE			Ponec
COU 603W	Action Research-Schl Counslng	3	6/22/2015	8/14/2015	ONLINE			Smith
COU 663W	Diagnosis & Mental Hlth Issues	3	6/22/2015	8/14/2015	ONLINE			TBD
EDU 5011	Psy Of Exceptional Children	3	5/19/2015	6/6/2015	MTWWR	0900	1200	Doyle
EDU 503A	Foundations Of Education	3	5/27/2015	5/29/2015	WWR	0900	1500	Townsend-Frey
EDU 5101	Growth&Developmnt of Child	9	6/1/2015	6/26/2015	MTWWR	1300	1600	Dickel
EDU 520W1	Foundations of Catholic Educ	3	6/1/2015	6/24/2015	ONLINE			Cook
EDU 520W2	Foundations Catholic Education	3	6/1/2015	6/24/2015	ONLINE			Cook
EDU 535A	Human Relations & Diversity	3	6/1/2015	6/26/2015	MTWWR	1300	1600	Wellman
EDU 535B	Human Relations & Diversity	3	6/29/2015	7/24/2015	MTWWR	1300	1600	TBD
EDU 5481	Teaching Read Middle & Sec Sch	3	6/1/2015	6/26/2015	MTWWR	0900	1200	Olson
EDU 5511	Methods of Instruction-Sec Tch	3	6/1/2015	6/26/2015	MTWWR	1300	1600	Engel
EDU 583A	Mgt Prac Classrm Teachers	9	6/29/2015	7/24/2015	MTWWR	0900	1200	Meyers
EDU 583B	Mgt Prac Classrm Teachers	9	6/29/2015	7/24/2015	MTWWR	0900	1200	Houtz
EDU 586A	Selected Topics In Education	0	6/9/2015	7/11/2015				
EDU 601A	Instructional Technology	3	6/1/2015	6/26/2015	MTWWR	0900	1200	Mansour
EDU 601B	Instructional Technology	3	6/29/2015	7/24/2015	MTWWR	0900	1200	Mansour
EDU 609W	Org & Adm Elem & Sec Schs	3	6/1/2015	7/24/2015	ONLINE			Mausbach
EDU 610W	Special Topics For Admin	3	6/1/2015	7/24/2015	ONLINE			McMullen
EDU 615W	Educational Research	3	6/1/2015	7/24/2015	ONLINE			Hickman
EDU 622W	Imp School-Community Rel	3	6/1/2015	7/24/2015	ONLINE			Mausbach
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¹Data plan required. LTE is available in select markets. Speeds will vary based on site conditions.

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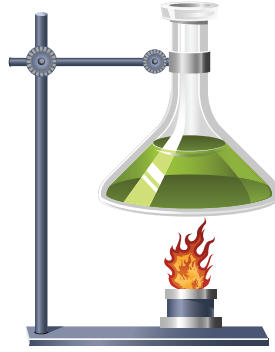
UNL Study: Guided Science Inquiry is Effective for Special Needs Students

Guided science inquiry provides students with more than the right answer — and a recent study finds that this approach works for more than one type of learner.

A group of Nebraska science educators recently used guided science inquiry to teach special education students, with nearly 90 percent reporting the method as successful in meeting students' learning needs.

Guided science inquiry is an approach that emphasizes concept development and comprehension. Students are guided toward, but not directly presented with, scientific concepts through investigation and interpretation.

The special education component was part of a larger study, CSI: Coaching Science Inquiry in Rural Schools from the National Center for Research on Rural Education (R2Ed) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to examine the implementation of guided scientific inquiry in rural schools. Sixty-one rural teachers responded to a survey as part of the study: 48 used guided science inquiry with students identified with special educational needs, and 42 rated it as an effective approach.



A Clearer Perspective

Project Manager Jim Houston worked with teachers to implement guided science inquiry and solicit project feedback. He and his team are encouraged by the responses from teachers who used inquiry with their special education students.

“The overwhelmingly positive response gives us a much clearer perspective on the effectiveness of this approach for special needs populations,” he said. “Teachers’ success indicates that guided science inquiry can be used successfully for a diverse population of students.”

Seven broad themes emerged from teachers’ responses to guided science inquiry for special education students:

■ **Hands-on approach:** The guided science inquiry approach led to better understanding, according to teachers involved in the study. It led students to rely less heavily on the text, allowing them to review what they did rather than what they read. One teacher felt the hands-on approach mimicked the way SPED students learn.

“The entire process worked well,” said a teacher participating in the study. “The students [with special education needs] were able to discover topics I wanted them to learn, without me having to come right out and tell them.”

■ **Fosters inclusion:** Teachers see guided science inquiry as a way to include SPED students in the mainstream classroom environment. One teacher said that using guided science inquiry allowed special needs students to work side-by-side with their peers, because “they were able to work at their own pace and explore with everyone else.”

■ **Enhances participation:** Teacher feedback also indicated a higher level of participa-

tion from their SPED students when using guided science inquiry, with one teacher acknowledging that their SPED students seemed to think more deeply about the content than with traditional instruction.

■ **Respects different levels:** Based on varying responses, guided science inquiry allows students to work at their level during instruction, thus increasing inclusion and engagement. Teachers appreciated that it still allowed each student to contribute to the end result of the science lesson.

From an instructional standpoint, one teacher said guided science inquiry allowed them to “meet the student at their level of understanding and bring them forward through the learning process.”

■ **Useful with adaptations:** Some teachers found the method useful for their SPED students after adapting it accordingly. Some adaptations include adjusting questions, starting with basic knowledge recall and spending more time to process concepts.

“[SPED students] needed more ‘leading’ [scaffolding] in the questions to get the desired outcome,” said one teacher.

■ **Lacked structure:** Several teachers found that while the guided inquiry approach worked well with most, the lack of typical classroom structure posed difficulty for some SPED students.

“[Guided science inquiry] caused frustration with a few students who dislike change,” reported a teacher participating in the study. “Sometimes [it] was too abstract for understanding.”

■ **Overall improvement:** Not all teachers pinpointed a single reason behind the success of guided science inquiry, yet many comments indicated that the method was better for students with special educational needs than traditional instruction.

“I find that special needs students are more receptive to, and successful with, the interactive inquiry approach than the traditional lecture, pen and paper methods,” said a teacher in the study.

For details on the CSI study, visit:

csiruralschools.unl.edu

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NSEA members are eligible to apply for each of three rounds of offerings of a scholarship from Blue Cross and Blue Shield designed to help make paying for graduate coursework a little easier.

The deadline for the next round of scholarships from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Professional Development Fund is **Wednesday, May 27**.

Applicants for the scholarship will receive an e-mail confirming receipt of the application (if you do not re-



ceive an e-mail, call NSEA).

The funds are for advanced degrees, to seek additional teaching endorsements or to take courses for certification. Stipends may cover up to 50 percent of the cost of a single, three-hour college course. Applicants may seek scholarship dollars for no more than three hours of courses. Books and supplies are not covered.

To apply, complete the application form on the NSEA website. The form will be on the website through May 27.

NSEA will notify applicants of

their scholarship status by the end of June. The goal is to award stipends to the largest number of members from each of NSEA's six governance districts. To be eligible, NSEA members must be covered by either single or family Blue Cross/Blue Shield health care. Previous applicants, successful or not, may re-apply. Applicants may receive scholarships in only two of the three scholarship cycles during a school year.

Recipients must offer evidence of completion of work at an accredited post-secondary institution to receive funds. Courses must be for credit.

Since 1986, 5,227 NSEA members have shared more than \$685,000 in Blue Cross and Blue Shield scholarship dollars. The program does not affect Blue Cross and Blue Shield premiums.

Questions? Reach Sally Bodtke at 1-800-742-0047 or via e-mail at:

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First-Year Tips & Important Papers

Students Get Tips From Aaberg, Sears at Delegate Assembly

One sure way a teacher-to-be can raise eyebrows – in a good way – during a job interview is to get to know the school district before the interview.

That was one of many tips for first year teachers Nebraska 2015 Teacher of the Year Shelby Aaberg gave to members of the Student Education Association of Nebraska (SEAN) at the organization's Delegate Assembly in April.

Attendees also learned about the most important piece of paper they will ever own – their teaching certificate – from NSEA Director of Instructional Advocacy Jay Sears, and elected officers for the 2015-16 Association year.

Wayne State College senior Joel Schroeder will serve as president, aided by Midland University junior Jeana Rezac. Doane College's Taylor Ruzicka was elected secretary.

Aaberg, a math teacher at Scottsbluff High School, said a candidate for a teaching job always has an edge when they have done their diligence and learned about the district at which they are applying for a job. He offered plenty of other tips, as well. For instance:

- Time is important in every classroom. "Think about how to 'buy' extra time in the classroom," he advised.

- Learn how to make transitions seamlessly.

- Every time you use a child's name, that child's confidence goes up.

- Write down two or three reflective sentences after every lesson. When you pull that lesson out in a year, those sentences will be of great assistance.

- Get to know people. "Leaders," said Aaberg, "get to know people."

Sears told the teachers-to-be that the teaching certificate ranks among the holder's most important papers, including driver's license, birth certificate, passport and marriage license. He also said acquiring a teaching certificate in Nebraska is only going to get more difficult, as Nebraska seeks to keep a high bar for teaching certificate applicants.

"Nebraska has always been a state where you could fog a mirror and get a certificate. But that's going away," he said.

Delegates also made substantial changes to SEAN Bylaws, and saw the delivery of several awards. Peru State



SEAN Delegate Assembly action: Discussion was intense during a presentation by Nebraska 2015 Teacher of the Year Shelby Aaberg. At top, Hastings College's Chelsey Morten and Peru State's Rae Carbaugh discuss an issue. At left, Northeast Community College's Adrienne Kruger makes a point. Below, Peru State College's Caitie Cassell listens as Midland University's Jeana Rezac shares her thoughts.

College's Amanda Volksen and the University of Nebraska-Kearney's Brittany Snider each earned \$1,000 scholarships from the NSEA-Retired affiliate, for use during their student teaching semester.

Also elected to serve on the SEAN Board of Directors during the 2015-16 year are Underclass Representative Blake Williamson of Northeast Community College; Southeast Region Representative Mikayla Nelson, Nebraska Wesleyan University; Northeast Region Representative Emily Wilmes, Wayne State College; and Metro Region Representative An Nguyen, University of Nebraska-Omaha.

Evann Vrana of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln received the J.D. Miller Underclass Award for her local chapter work.



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Look for details more at:

neamb.com

David Glenn is Nebraska's NEA Member Benefits representative

Three Urban Legends of Personal Finance

From Social Security to Wills, Don't Believe Everything You Hear About Money!

By David Muhlbaum

Urban myths. You know, stories about people's kidneys being stolen or that, say, certain corporate logos have the mark of the beast? These exist in personal finance, too — maxims about saving, spending and investing that are startling, but also just plausible enough to seem real. They get shared among friends, on social media, and take on a life of their own.

At Kiplinger, our job is to debunk such nonsense so you can prosper by following tried-and-true principles of effective wealth creation and asset management. We'll unmask three biggies for you.

LEGEND: Social Security Will Be Gone by the Time You Retire.

This misguided view is common among younger Americans, but it's just wrong. Social Security's trustees expect the program to remain in the black at least until 2019. And while it's true that the money put aside will be used up by 2033 if nothing is changed, new money coming in from payroll taxes will still be enough to support almost 80 percent of promised benefits. So Congress has nearly two decades to work out a relatively modest fix. They could raise payroll taxes, extend the retirement age, or make a small cut in benefits.

Just be sure you keep Social Security's mission in focus: It's a supplemental retirement insurance program and was never meant to be a pension, per se. You will need multiple sources of income to live comfortably in retirement, including savings, investments and perhaps annuities. Those are your job to assemble.

LEGEND: Look at the Rise in Home Prices. Buying In Is Your Ticket to

Wealth.

Now don't get us wrong: Homeownership still makes sense for millions of Americans. Deducting mortgage interest is a big tax break for homeowners who itemize, and paying down principal lets you stack up long-term savings systematically.

But the days of rapidly rising real estate prices are gone. Tighter lending practices and the millennial generation's lack of interest in owning homes are contributing factors to slower long-term growth in the housing market. Think of your home as a place to live, not as an investment.

LEGEND: A Will? That's Just for Rich People Trying to Beat the Tax Man.

Die without a will and you let complete strangers decide how to split up what you own — your children. It's called dying "intestate," an act (or, failure to act) that leaves the process to state law. Without a will, the court gives first dibs to a spouse and children, followed by other relatives. No family? Then your property goes to the state. Buh-bye.

It's so darned cheap to write a will that everyone should have one, even if only to spell out funeral and burial wishes. Many people can do it themselves for well under \$100 using a website like LegalZoom or Nolo. Now, if your circumstances are at all complex, you'll need a lawyer, who will charge about \$300 to draw up a simple will and \$1,000 to \$3,000 for an estate plan that involves a will and a trust. Do it. You owe it to your family.

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Our Commitment to Education Cannot 'Waiver'

Teachers Are the Heart of Education System

By Dr. Matt Blomstedt,
State Commissioner of Education

It has been a long time since there were serious conversations about reauthorizing the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the assessment and accountability provisions known as No Child Left Behind.

Now, a whole generation of students later, we are finally in the midst of perhaps fruitful conversations about ESEA.

Certainly, NCLB started with the admirable premise that we should ensure that "no child is left behind." And I too often call attention to the importance of focusing on "Every Student, Every Day." But, in attempting to leave "no child behind," we question whether the federal system itself has failed to provide the structure and motives needed to improve education as a whole. Some NCLB elements are important. For example, it makes sense to pay attention to student achievement data. However, an accountability system built only on student achievement data undermines the real intent of improving educational outcomes.

NCLB accountability sets proficiency goals as if to elicit an unattainable "Lake Wobegon" effect. The goals — and punitive measures — misplaced the system's focus on meeting quotas and placing blame. In some cases, that undermined the success of the very students that we sought to help.

'Things That Matter'

Then along came the "waiver." U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan rightly recognized that we needed a path away from the "average yearly progress" trap, so he instituted a process where states could establish "their own" accountability system by adopting college and career ready standards and implementing teacher/principal evaluation systems. Although somewhat closer in theory to system reform, the waiver requirements appeared too restrictive for states like Nebraska to grow and build a system that really focused on Every Student, Every Day, and invested in supports for schools, teachers and students.

A year ago, the Nebraska Legislature asked us to build a meaningful accountability system and, at about the same time, the State Board of Education asked me to develop an ESEA Flexibility, or, "waiver."

On both fronts, we focused our attention, energy and resources on those things that were right for Nebraska. We had already begun the work of writing and revising standards, already invested in a meaningful data system and had implemented NeSA assessments. Schools were focused on school improvement and, overall, Nebraska has always been committed to public education.



Blomstedt

In an effort to keep the focus on "things that matter" to schools, communities and families, we redefined accountability as something shared through a system — not as something done to schools. Under this philosophy, the State Board and the Department of Education set out to build our next generation accountability system: Accountability for a Quality Education System Today and Tomorrow, or AQuESTT.

Assessment is Not the Goal

AQuESTT is a quest, a journey, for a better system that shares the responsibility for school improvement with students, parents, teachers, schools, communities and policymakers. AQuESTT is about every student, every day.

The six tenets of AQuESTT are organized in two domains. The focus of the Teaching and Learning domain is effective educators, assessment and college and career readiness (standards). The Student Success and Access domain focuses on educational opportunities, transitions and positive partnerships. Combining these domains builds a holistic accountability approach based on the premise that a single traditional assessment should not be the sole measure of success. While AQuESTT recognizes student achievement, it emphasizes that teachers, parents, communities and students are all critical to the success of every student and every school.

AQuESTT seeks to make each school, teacher and student the best they can be.

Assessment is not our goal. Our shared goal and commitment is student learning.

My role is to make certain the state board, the department and state investments are organized to benefit student learning. Our commitment to education must not "waiver," even as we balance the demands and expectations of our federal and state partners. AQuESTT both supports and expects success. We must lock ourselves arm-in-arm, holding one another responsible for our part of the system, supporting one another if we stumble.

Accountability is shared. We should and will celebrate our successes together, recognizing that teachers are the heart of our system.

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A Dream in Crisis

I started working on the night shift in the meat packing plant while I was a senior in high school. It was the dirtiest, bloodiest, hardest...and most dangerous work I would ever do in my life. But the wage I received 50 years ago was more in real dollars than the average wage paid today for the same job I did then. For working families and their kids today, it has been a tough time.

Working for a living has always been a challenge, but, in America, hard work has been the 'secret' to success. The

lie in our history is that America is a society without classes. The truth in America was that hard work was the key in rising from one class to another. That truth has been challenged in a new book from Robert Putnam, *Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis* (Simon & Schuster, 2015). We are all aware of the growing "income gap" between the ultra-rich and the average American. What Putnam presents is a disturbing exploration of the "opportunity gap" that has resulted in the first American generation with fewer opportunities to rise than their parents. We

see the effects of that gap every day. Where are the traditional voices for the working class?

Important Classrooms

For years, the onslaught of attacks on workers and their unions has been relentless. Look at the legislative attacks across the nation on collective bargaining and labor contracts, due process, pay, benefits, and health insurance for workers in every sector of our economy. For more than a century, American unions have been a powerful voice for workers in every job sector, but, as unions have struggled against both economic and policy forces, union membership has continued to fall for all unions. The implication is that every union is in danger of becoming an island with continually less power and influence exerted by other unions around it.

The state of every union depends on the state of unions in general. Continuing support for the ideas of collective bargaining, workplace standards, safety, pay, benefits, and a voice in how work is organized and controlled is ultimately dependent on public opinion and support for those who do the work in America.

The value of the voice of the worker — the union — goes far beyond pay. Many scholars point to unions as important hands-on classrooms for democracy. It is where people

learn how to debate, discuss, explore, and decide issues important to them. With the decline in unions across this society, those classrooms are disappearing. Unions provide learning space for the civil debate and participative democracy to help balance the opportunity gap of poor kids and poor communities.

Natural Allies

Fifty years ago, I was lucky to have had the opportunity to work — and rise — in a tough job. At that time, more than 30 percent of all workers were union members. Today that rate has fallen to about 10 percent. At the same time, the opportunity gap has widened.

That matters for all of us, union members or not, workers or not, employed or not. Working communities have lost their natural allies, powerful voices speaking to the value of workers' issues. Every community is better off with union voices. And that union voice is now only a third of what it was when I began working.

We don't have a labor party in this country or a nationally identified labor movement. And now, only 10 percent of the work force are union members, the lowest unionism rate in more than 100 years. I began working when the opportunity to dream...and rise through hard work...was a reality. As Robert Putnam's book describes, that dream is now in crisis. The solution is not in dreaming — every community must act to support the voices that speak for the working class.



The widening opportunity gap: NSEA Executive Director Craig R. Christiansen at 18 with his father in a newsletter photo for the meat-packing company where both worked. Do these opportunities still exist for poor kids?

Willie, Sacagawea and the Civil War

All Three Converge on Members at NSEA-Retired Spring Conference

What do Willie Nelson, the son of Sacagawea and the Civil War all have in common?

All were topics of discussion at the 2015 edition of the NSEA-Retired Spring Conference held at the St. Benedict Center north of Schuyler last month. The conference was one of the biggest ever, with nearly 150 attending.

A highlight was the return of historical “edutainer” Darrel Draper, who portrayed Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, the son of Sacagawea.

Historian Jerry Lippincott delivered a discussion on the Civil War, and displayed artifacts from some of those battles. NSEA Retired member Art Tanderup, Neligh, talked about last summer’s concert in his Neligh-area cornfield that featured Willie Nelson and Neil Young, among others.

The conference featured a morning keynote address by Mary Ann (McGovern) Carson, author of *Down the Tracks of Time*. Her book tells the story of a young Iowa woman who went to work as a telegrapher at Hershey and North Platte, among other sites, for Union Pacific Railroad during World War II.

The conference also featured breakout sessions on health insurance, olive oils and self-publishing, among other topics, as well as an afternoon business meeting. The favored dessert reception celebrated NSEA-Retired’s 30th anniversary celebration, and was followed by a wrap up, evaluation and door prizes to close the day.

NSEA-Retired turns 30!

Roger Rea, NSEA-Retired President

Ten dedicated Nebraska educators met 30 years ago to explore starting one of the first statewide retired organizations for the National Education Association. On Sept. 14, 1985, they signed the first charter for NSEA-Retired, with the mission of advancing quality education in Nebraska and protecting retirement benefits for all retired school employees. Thirty years later, our membership has grown to more than 5,400 retirees. More than 400 pre-retired lifetime subscribers have pre-paid their dues in anticipation of having full membership benefits in the NEA-Retired and NSEA-Retired, once they do retire, without any additional payment of annual retired dues.

Current lifetime dues for NEA-Retired/NSEA-Retired are \$450 (local retired dues amounts vary and can increase that amount by \$100). Last summer we learned of a likely increase in lifetime dues amounts either in 2016 or 2017. Current active NSEA members, as well as annual members for NSEA-Retired, can beat the dues increase by going to our website, clicking on the “Join Now” tab on the left and completing the membership application online. Lifetime dues can be spread over five months (at \$90 per month) to make the payment of



Platte Valley Gift: Members of the Platte Valley Retired Education Association gave \$1,000 to the 20/20 Campaign for the NSEA Children’s Fund at Delegate Assembly (see pages 7-9 for details). From left are PVREA members Jan Barnason, Hastings; Guy Roggenkamp, Grand Island; and President Mary Ann Niemoth, Hastings.

life dues more affordable. That website is at:
www.nsea.org/retired

NSEA-Retired Well-Represented at NSEA Delegate Assembly

Representing retired members at NSEA’s Delegate Assembly were:

Capitol District: Pat Etherton, Arlene Rea, Bill Hayes, Lincoln; Gretchen Terpsma, Bennett.

Elkhorn District: Art Tanderup, Neligh; Dan Schiefelbein, Columbus.

Metro District: Ruby Davis, Liz Rea, Walta Sue Dodd, Carol Krejci, all of Omaha; Renae Kelly, Springfield

Panhandle District: James McDermott, Scottsbluff.

Sandhills District: Dee Gillham, Bartlett.

Tri-Valley District: Janice Barnason and Mary Ann Niemoth, Hastings; Guy Roggenkamp, Grand Island.

At-Large: Tom Black, West Point.

Scholarships Awarded

The NSEA-Retired presented two \$1,000 SEAN/NSEA-Retired Scholarships to two deserving students at the SEAN Delegate Assembly in Lincoln on April 11.

Recipients were Amanda Volksen of Peru State College and Brittany Snider of the University of Nebraska-Kearney.

The scholarships benefit students during their student teaching semester. Applicants were required to write an essay on why they chose to enter the teaching profession, identifying a teacher who was central to that decision, and explaining their financial need. Another essay was required, asking students to describe their involvement in their SEAN activities and leadership roles they filled. Students were also required to have recommendation letters written on their behalf by their chapter adviser, a chapter teacher, and an instructor on the faculty staff. A rubric created by Walta Sue Dodd evaluated the applications more objectively.

Quilt Tickets on Sale

Raffle tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5, and are available at any NSEA-Retired event, or by calling NSEA’s Rebecca Smith at 1-800-742-0047. The quilt drawing will be at the July NSEA Board meeting. The beautiful baby quilt was created by Walta Sue Dodd’s sister, Gloria Boham.

— Renae Kelly, Editor
renaerkelly@gmail.com

In the News:

Tri County's Krejci Feted by Business Group

NSEA member Dennis Krejci, a business teacher at Tri County High School near DeWitt, has been named the National Business Education Association (NBEA) Secondary Teacher of the Year.

The award recognizes a secondary business teacher for contributions to business education through teaching, publications and other organizations. The award also looks at participation in local, state, regional and national associations.

After stops at Palisade and Johnson-Brock, Krejci joined the Tri County staff in 1992. He has served on numerous committees at Tri County, has been the school's FBLA adviser, and chairs served on the Nebraska FBLA state board of directors. Four of his students served as state officers and 16 have placed in the top 10 of their events at the National Leadership Conference, two of them placing first.

Krejci is past president of the Nebraska State Business Education Association, as well as the Mountain-Plains Business Education Association. He has served on the NBEA Executive Board for seven years.

NSEA Board OKs Matching Funds

The NSEA Board of Directors in April approved a request from the Lincoln Education Association for a \$3,000 matching funds grant to assist in the re-election of Lincoln Board of Education member Katie McLeese Stephenson.

A key program provided by NSEA is the delivery of matching funds to aid local associations in the passage of bond elections and the election of candidates friendly to public education.

McLeese Stephenson is completing a first term on the Lincoln board and faces a stiff re-election contest on May 5.



Scholarship Semester

Two active members of the Student Education Association of Nebraska (SEAN) were proud recipients of \$1,000 scholarships from the NSEA-Retired affiliate in April. Amanda Volksen, left, a student at Peru State College; and Brittany Snider, right, a student at the University of Nebraska-Kearney; received the scholarship news at the SEAN Delegate Assembly at NSEA Headquarters in April. NSEA President Nancy Fulton presented the awards.

For many years, the NSEA-Retired organization has presented the scholarships to up to three SEAN members each year. The scholarships, awarded based on need, Association activism, and recommendation of campus advisors, are to be used during the recipients student teaching semester.

Annual Ag Sack Lunch Program Makes Field-to-Fork Connection

The annual Ag Sack Lunch Program is closing a fifth successful year of educating Nebraska fourth-graders about where their food comes from and the importance of agriculture to the state's economy.

The program provides a free sack lunch, which features nutritious foods produced in Nebraska, a 20-minute presentation by "Ag Ambassadors" on the state's major commodities, and a fact-filled card game that students can take home, which helps carry the agriculture centered message home to their families.

"The students really enjoyed their day in Lincoln and the lunch was a great way to start our field trip," said NSEA member Kristi Bult, a teacher at Hartington-Newcastle Public School in Hartington. "They played cards on the way home on the bus."

Each year, more than 20,000 students visit the State Capitol Building in Lincoln as part of their fourth grade curriculum. Teachers are invited to sign up their classes for the program when they visit the State Capitol. The program is sponsored by the Nebraska Soybean Board (NSB), the Nebraska Corn Board (NCB) and the Nebraska Pork Producers Association (NPPA).

The students are engaged with interactive presentations by "Ag Ambassadors," University of Nebraska-Lincoln students who are passionate about agriculture and can relate personal stories while sharing information about the importance of agriculture in Nebraska.

Fourth grade teachers interested in participating in the program next year should watch for details in the September edition of *The Voice*.



Comment Sought from Educators on Math Standards

Draft of Revisions Available for Review on NDE Website

The State Board of Education is seeking public comment on the draft of the new state Mathematics standards, and there are several ways members of the public — including and especially educators — may provide input.

Interested parties may complete an online survey; provide testimony at the meetings of the State Board at the board's May 7-8, June 4-5, or Aug. 6-7 meetings; or send an email with comments to:

nde.standardsinput@nebraska.gov

The proposed standards can be found on the Department of Education website, with a link found on the homepage. The site also includes a link to the electronic survey, which is open until Friday, May 29.

The link to the NDE math information can be found at:

education.ne.gov/math/index.html

Speaking of Teaching

“There is a place in America to take a stand: it is public education. It is the underpinning of our cultural and political system. It is the great common ground. Public education after all is the engine that moves us as a society toward a common destiny...It is in public education that the American dream begins to take shape.”

— *Tom Brokaw, broadcast journalist and author*

Mailed By: The Nebraska State Education Association
605 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508-2742



Outstanding Read Across America Event: Omaha Central Park Elementary teacher and Omaha Education Association member Bobby Miller's classroom and colleagues had some special visitors to celebrate NEA's Read Across America this year. Longtime Cat-in-the-Hat representative and retired Lincoln teacher Pat Etherton, center, read to the students of Miller, and to students of colleagues and OEA members Alex Walenz, back center, and Sheena Kafka, at right. As a bonus, NSEA President Nancy Fulton, between Walenz and Kafka, also spent time reading in honor of the birthday of Dr. Seuss.

'Awesome' Noise Control

From Deborah Allen, a fourth-grade teacher at Valmead Elementary School in Lenoir, NC.

“I used to have difficulty getting the class quiet. Nothing short of screaming ‘shut up!’ seemed to make any difference. Then I wrote the word ‘awesome’ on the board. When I had to speak to the entire class, I erased a letter beginning with the final letter. If the class made it to lunch time with the word intact, they sat where they liked. If not, they had assigned seats. If they



lost the entire word by the end of the day, the following day they had silent lunch. If the entire word was intact at the end of the day, they were rewarded with 15 extra minutes of PE the next day. The first two days the class was at ‘awe’ by lunch time and they had an ‘a’ left at the end of the day. Each day they improved. This past week they had the word intact at lunch two days out of five. It worked for me when all else failed.”

Sign up for Works4Me at this link:
www.nea.org/tools/Works4Me.html