

THE

VOICE

The Nebraska State Education Association ❖ November 2013

NEBRASKA TAX MODERNIZATION

What It Is. Why You Should Care.

THE
TAXPAYERS OF
NEBRASKA

100

DF 98629928 A

John W. Snow
Secretary of the Treasury.

C 37

ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS

THE SOWER



Upcoming Assignments

Panhandle Advocacy Conference Nov. 9

■ **What:** This event is a must for negotiators and Association leaders who hope to be up-to-date and holding the latest information when bargaining opens this fall for the 2014-15 contract year.

■ **Details:** At Scottsbluff's Hampton Inn Convention Center. For details, call your NSEA field director at 1-800-742-0047.

American Education Week Nov. 18-22

■ **What:** For more than 90 years, NEA has led the observance of great public schools! Celebrate with a guest 'Educator for a Day' by asking a local official or dignitary to visit your classroom.

■ **Details:** There is an observance each day of the week! Learn more on Page 5.

Nominate a Colleague Jan. 31

■ **What:** A handful of deserving NSEA members and others will be recognized for their work at NSEA's 153rd Delegate Assembly in April. Do you have a colleague worthy of nomination?

■ **Details:** Learn more, and find out how to nominate a co-worker on Page 17.

Children's Fund Stands Ready to Help Kids

Members Can Access Fund, Help Kids in Need

The 'thank you' letters are moving.

For instance, take this letter, received by NSEA from a Nebraska teacher who saw that three siblings in her school district were in dire need of winter clothing:

"The family was so thankful for the new clothing items and I wanted to make sure you were aware of their excitement

and gratitude. All three kids stood at the checkout just beaming! It was a heart-warming experience."

Clearly, such testimonials indicate the ability of the NSEA Children's Fund to make a difference.

Every NSEA member knows of children in heartbreaking situations: children who wear thin jackets to school in cold weather because they have nothing else; students who get decent meals only when school is in session; students who can't see the

front of the classroom because they need eyeglasses.

Teachers often use their own dollars to help these children, knowing they can't help every child. NSEA created the Children's Fund, and continues to work to raise money for that Fund.

Since 1994, donations to the Children's Fund have provided hundreds of thousands of dollars to help children in need. In the past two years alone, the Children's Fund has provided nearly \$100,000 in re-



How to Help

Would you or your local association like to contribute to the NSEA Children's Fund? Send your check to the NSEA Children's Fund, 605 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508-2742. Your contribution is tax deductible.

lief.

Contributions to the NSEA Children's Fund come from teachers and businesses and fundraisers across the state — and it's important to note that every penny contributed goes to help children. NSEA picks up *all* the administrative expenses.

To receive funding to help a student, there is no red tape, no form for teachers to fill out. Simply contact the NSEA at 1-800-742-0047 and ask for Sally Bodtke. Or e-mail her at:

sally.bodtke@nsea.org

Cover Story:

The Nebraska Legislature is hard at work during the interim, with two studies that will have a direct effect on your school district and, ultimately, on what you do in your classroom. Learn more about it on

Page 8



Nebraska State Education Association
605 S. 14th Street
Lincoln, NE 68508-2742 • www.nsea.org
(402) 475-7611 • (800) 742-0047

Volume 67, No. 3
ISSN Number: 1085-0783
USPS Number: 000-369

Great Public Schools For Every Child

Executive Director
Assoc. Executive Director
Director of Public Affairs
Assistant Comm. Director

Craig R. Christiansen
Neal Clayburn
Karen Kilgarin
Al Koontz

NSEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President
Vice President
NEA Director
NEA Director

Nancy Fulton, Wilber-Clatonia
Leann Widhalm, Norfolk
John Heineman, Lincoln
Jenni Absalon, Lincoln

Official publication of the Nebraska State Education Association, 605 South 14th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508-2742. Periodical postage paid at Lincoln, NE, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: send address changes to The Voice, NSEA, 605 S. 14th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508-2742.

Published and mailed 6 times yearly in September, Oc-

tober, November, February, April and August. Published online in December, January, March and May.

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.

Advertising rates available on request. Appearance of an advertisement in The Voice does not imply NSEA endorsement of the product advertised or views expressed.

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.



George Saw It Coming



**NSEA President
Nancy Fulton**

“
Some of
the closure’s
damage is
irreversible...
at such an
important,
formative stage,
those children
will never see
those lost days
of learning
restored.”

I resolved years ago that, no matter where my travels would lead me, whether home or away, I would read a local newspaper each day.

It remains the only resolution I have been able to keep among the many I have made over the years. The habit keeps me well informed and often gives me grist for the musings on this page.

For instance, long-time Lincoln Journal Star political writer Don Walton wrote recently about the shutdown of the federal government, and reminded readers of what President George Washington foretold in his 1796 farewell address.

Washington said “However (political parties) may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely in the course of time and things to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men will be enabled to subvert the power of the people and to usurp for themselves the reins of government, destroying afterwards the very engines which have lifted them to unjust dominion.”

Read that again: Washington peered through the earliest, most pure mists of our democracy and saw well into the future when a tangled mess of party politics, heavily influenced by outsiders, would outweigh the well-being of the republic.

Irreversible Damage

As I write this for the November edition of *The Voice*, congressional leaders have just come to their senses and ended the government shutdown and, for the moment, resolved the debt ceiling crisis.

Many of you know how the shutdown affected students and their families. Some students saw their parents furloughed. Community action programs had funding sources disrupted and closed down. Small businesses with federal contracts struggled to make ends meet.

And that was after just two weeks of closure.

Some of the closure’s damage is irreversible. In the first days of the shutdown alone, estimates were that 57,000 American children had lost Head Start services. At such an important, formative stage, those children will never see those lost

days of learning restored. Regardless of where blame for the shutdown lies – and there is plenty to go around – that fact tears at my heart.

By closing the government and flirting with potential economic disaster, policymakers elected to place rigid partisan politics ahead of children and the American good.

‘Raise Your Hand’

In his comments on the shutdown, Walton said “Government is us, not them. Congress is our representative body. It does not belong to the political parties. It was not designed to serve their interests, and it should not be held captive to petty partisan ambitions.”

So what can we do as educators?

We can continue to teach and lead. We can push the message that government, as embodied by public education, works. American Education Week would be the perfect time to spread that message (see details on Page 5).

We can get involved in NEA’s “Raise Your Hand for Student Success” which is the theme for American Education Week, Nov. 18-22. The week serves as a tribute to the people who work with our students, from the classroom teacher to the bus driver to the cafeteria worker.

During American Education Week, we can remind everyone — including your local newspaper reporters! — that education is a partnership that should hold everyone accountable for student success. Parents must ensure that their children come to school ready to learn. Students must work to achieve full potential. Schools must be accountable to patrons. Communities should be engaged and supportive of their schools. Elected officials must provide the tools and resources schools need to succeed.

All must share the responsibility for success — just as it ought to be shared in Washington, D.C.

As another president, John F. Kennedy, said: “Let us not seek the Republican answer, or the Democratic answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future.”



Finding Nebraska’s Great Public Schools (GPS)

NSEA members from around the state appear or are mentioned in this issue. Look for details on colleagues from:

Anselmo.....Page 13	Atkinson.....Page 24	Kearney.....Page 24	Platte Valley Retired.....Page 22
Arnold.....Page 23	Bellevue.....Page 14, 18, 24	Maxwell.....Page 23	Ravenna.....Page 24
	Central City.....Page 24	Omaha.....Page 24	Seward.....Page 23
	Elkhorn.....Page 23, 24	Omaha Retired.....Page 22	Sumner.....Page 24
	Hastings.....Page 14	Panhandle Retired.....Page 22	Waterloo.....Page 24
	Hyannis.....Page 24	Plattsmouth.....Page 10	Westside District 66.....Page 12

First Nebraska
Educators & Employee
Groups
Credit Union

"Where Members Always Come First!"™

www.firstnebraska.org

800.882.0244

CELEBRATE THE SEASON WITH A CHRISTMAS LOAN!

“FROM SPECIAL GIFTS TO SEASONAL TRIPS, A CHRISTMAS LOAN FROM FIRST NEBRASKA EDUCATORS CAN HELP MAKE ALL OF YOUR HOLIDAY WISHES COME TRUE.”

BORROW UP TO \$2,000

PAYMENTS UNDER \$99 PER MONTH!*

AS LOW AS 11.9% APR*

VISIT A BRANCH NEAREST YOU OR CALL 800.882.0244.
APPLY ONLINE AT WWW.FIRSTNEBRASKA.ORG

* Rates and terms subject to change. Rates effective as of 10/15/2013. Excludes all loans already financed at the credit union. Payment example: on a \$2,000 loan with a 24-month term at 9.99%, monthly payment would be \$98.21 with credit life and disability. Credit qualifications and other restrictions apply. Expires 12/31/2013.



Federally insured by NCUA.

Celebrate AEW!

Great Public Schools: A Basic Right and Our Responsibility

Access to a great public school is a basic right for every child. Great public schools are also the responsibility of every American. We have an obligation to our children, to our future as a nation, to work to ensure that every child has access to quality public schools.

With those obligations and responsibilities, it is only right that we observe the 92nd American Education Week — scheduled for Nov. 18-22 this year — to celebrate public education and honor individuals who are making a difference in ensuring that every child receives a quality education. The weeklong celebration features a special observance each day of the week. They include:

■ **Monday, Nov. 18 – Nationwide Kickoff:** Schools across the country will celebrate excellence in education by hosting kickoff events and activities.

■ **Tuesday, Nov. 19 – Parents Day:** Schools will invite parents into the classroom for a firsthand look at what the school day is like for their children.

■ **Wednesday, Nov. 20 – Education Support Professionals Day:** ESPs keep schools running and stu-

dents safe, healthy and ready to learn.

■ **Thursday, Nov. 21 – Educator for a Day:** On this day, community leaders are invited to



experience the day as educators and experience the challenges of teaching and the needs of students.

■ **Friday, Nov. 22 – Substitute Educators Day:** Substitute educators play a vital role in the maintenance and continuity of daily education.

The National Education Association was one of the creators and original sponsors of American Education Week.

Distressed that 25 percent of the country's World War I draftees were illiterate and 9 percent were physically unfit, representatives of the NEA and the American Legion met in 1919 to seek ways to generate public support for education.

The conventions of both organizations subsequently adopted resolutions of support for a national effort to raise public awareness of the im-

Host a Classroom Guest, Share the Visit With Us!

Have you considered inviting a community leader into your classroom during American Education Week?

It's a good way to connect with policymakers and leaders and to help them understand what it takes to manage a classroom in today's public schools.



You might consider inviting your mayor, city council president, city council representative, county commissioner or even your state senator. Don't forget that asking a school board member might also be a good idea.

And note that Thursday, Nov. 21, is the 'Educator for a Day' observance — but you can host an educator any day that will work for your visitor. Just be certain to extend the invitation well in advance.

When your visitor attends, snap a photo with you and your guest and post it, with proper identification, to the NSEA Facebook page at:

[facebook.com/NSEA.org](https://www.facebook.com/NSEA.org)

portance of education. In 1921, the NEA Representative Assembly in Des Moines called for designation of one week each year to spotlight education.

The first observance of American Education Week occurred December 4-10, 1921, with the NEA and American Legion as the cosponsors.

For more details go to the website at:

www.nea.org/grants/19823

Teachers Know: Some Kids Aren't Safe at Home

DHHS Seeks Foster Parents

Teachers are more aware of this than most citizens: Some Nebraska children are simply unable to live safely at home.

Those children need a secure home and caring adults to help protect them from trauma and stress.

Foster parents are in short supply across Nebraska. The Department of Health and Human Services is seeking foster parents for children of all ages, ethnicity and cultures, especially teenagers, multiple siblings, children with physical challenges and children experiencing emotional or behavioral issues.

The DHHS and a family team work with children and families to find ways to safely reunite biological families. But as those issues are worked out, foster parents play a key role by providing a loving, caring bridge back to a stable home life.

Emergency foster care families or individuals provide emergency care for children in crisis, and can expect to provide care for a short period of time.

If a child's safety in their family home cannot be assured,

they may be placed with a foster family for a short time. The foster family provides care in a safe and nurturing home until a permanent living arrangement can be made. The primary goal is to reunite children with their family. How long children live with a foster family is dependent on the child's needs.

If children in foster care cannot be safely reunited with their biological family, DHHS staff look for adults who can provide a permanent, safe and healthy home.

For those adults that consider one of those three levels of care, the first step is to work with DHHS staff to assist in completion of a background check and home study.

To learn more about foster parenting, contact Kelli Wendelin at the DHHS at 402-471-5190 or via e-mail at

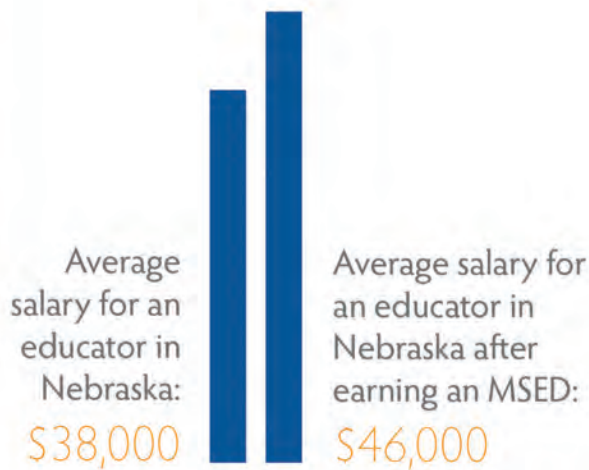
kelli.wendelin@nebraska.gov

You can also call 1-800-772-2738 for details, or visit the DHHS website. Once at the website click on the 'Children and Families' link, then on the 'Child Welfare' link and then the 'Adoption' link. That website is at:

<http://www.dhhs.ne.gov>

Master of Science in Education

Enroll today in Peru State's online Master of Science in Education program. Personal attention, online flexibility and relevant courses - all for one of the affordable prices in the region.



Raise your pay with step increases.



Awarded "Best Online Masters Degree in Education" from **GetEducated.com**.

Awarded "Best Online Masters Curriculum and Instruction" from **GetEducated.com**.

\$9,990

Total cost for the 36-credit-hour program, compared to \$19,000 for a 30-credit-hour program at a private institution.*



If you start the next cohort in June 2014, your graduation will be **December 2015**.



www.peru.edu/graduate



*Tuition is subject to change.

Healthy News: Rate Hike Just 2.3%

Rates, Benefits OK'd for 2014-15 by Educators Health Alliance

Another Below Average Rate Hike for BCBS

EHA premium rates for the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska (BCBSNE) health care plan used by all but three Nebraska school districts will increase by 2.3 percent for all benefit options on Sept. 1, 2014. The Board of Directors of the Educators Health Alliance approved the renewal rates and benefits in October.

When the 2014-15 plan year starts on Sept. 1, 2014, it will mark the 12th consecutive year the rate increases have been less than 10 percent. The increases in 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 were 0.0 percent, 2.99 percent and 6.4 percent respectively. The EHA has kept the increases well below national trends.

"Several factors contributed to the EHA's ability to achieve a rate increase below medical inflation," said Neal Clayburn, chair of the EHA board and NSEA associate executive director.

"The wise use of medical services and maintenance of healthy practices by our members has resulted in favorable claim experience," said Clayburn. "Additional factors include the work of BCBS, the dependent eligibility verification recently completed, and the collaboration of the associations that govern the plan: the Nebraska School Boards Association, Nebraska Council of School Administrators and the NSEA."

Rates will increase by 2.3 percent for all rates and benefit categories. This includes all medical and dental plans as well as active employee and early retiree categories.

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) continues to be an important consideration in the development of the EHA health insurance renewal of rates and benefits.

■ Currently the medical and pharmacy benefits have separate out of pocket maximums and the non-pharmacy copays are applied without limit. As a result of the ACA, the out of pocket maximum expense for all services will be combined into a single

maximum amount on Sept. 1, 2014. This amount will be lower than the current combined amounts for medical and pharmacy.

■ The renewal rates include additional fees and taxes required by the ACA.

■ The \$5,000 deductible plan will be eliminated as it does not meet the ACA "minimum value" definition.

■ Early retirees will receive a one month, 65 percent reduction in their current premium rate to be applied for the month of December 2013 only. This reduction is made possible by funds the EHA obtained under the Early Retiree Reinsurance Program (ERRP).

"The EHA continues to work diligently to achieve rate stability and increases below health insurance industry averages," said Clayburn. "In addition to good plan management, utilization substantially affects rates. Our members are

making smart health care choices and that is reflected in continued favorable experience with regard to utilization."

The Board also approved a change to take effect on Sept. 1, 2015, that expands the definition of eligible dependent to include domestic partners and their children. To qualify, the subscriber and his/her domestic partner must meet specific criteria and provide certification of the domestic partnership. Additional details are available at:

www.ehapan.org/

The EHA plan's coverage with Blue Cross Blue Shield includes more than 70,000 education employees, early retirees and their dependents in more than 400 school groups. NSEA formed the statewide health care network 45 years ago. A 12-member board representing NSEA, the NASB and the NCSA now governs the health care plan.

A History of Rate Increases

A history of rate increases for the Blue Cross and Blue Shield plan, now managed by the EHA Board of Directors, shows rate increases over the past 12 years have been at or below the national average:

2003-04:.....	9.40%
2004-05:.....	9.70%
2005-06:.....	9.00%
2006-07:.....	8.84%
2007-08:.....	7.80%
2008-09:.....	4.80%
2009-10:.....	7.70%
2010-11:.....	4.56%
2011-12:.....	0.00%
2012-13:.....	2.99%
2013-14:.....	6.40%
2014-15:.....	2.30%

24th Annual Nebraska

Paraeducator Conference

Mark Your Calendars Now!

Monday, February 17, 2014 in Kearney, Nebraska

The Nebraska Paraeducator Conference brings together paraeducators from across the state to learn new ideas and strategies, to meet other paraeducators and share their own experiences and ideas.

For more information visit:

"<http://para.unl.edu/conference/paraconference.html>"

An important part of the conference is to recognize outstanding paraeducators who are nominated by school districts throughout the state. The selected individual will be honored at the conference. To nominate an outstanding paraeducator, visit "<http://para.unl.edu/conference/paraconference.html>"



Sponsored by the Nebraska Department of Education and Project PARA
University of Nebraska - College of Education and Human Sciences



TAKE NOTE

Progress Made on Salary Front

Nebraska teacher salaries have made modest gains in national salary rankings in recent years.

That's the good news.

The flip side of the coin is this: while near an all-time high in the salary rankings, Nebraska has dropped one spot in those rankings in the past year, and our teachers still earn far less than the national average. In fact, Nebraska teachers earn \$9,600 per year less than their Wyoming neighbors; about \$2,000 less than Iowa teachers; and \$900 less than educators in Colorado.

The average teacher salary in Wyoming in 2011-12 was \$57,222; the U.S. average was \$55,418.

The post-recession rebound has placed the salary average for Nebraska teachers – \$48,154 – at 36th in the nation, down one spot from a year earlier. The ranking uses numbers from the 2011-12 school year, and comes from the National Education Association's annual Rankings & Estimates report.

Nebraska's average salary has surpassed that of Kansas and Missouri in recent years. Meanwhile, South Dakota educators have dropped to dead last in the rankings, with an average salary of \$38,804.

"The fact that Nebraska has made progress on the salary front in recent years gives credit to the hard work performed by our local association negotiators around the state," said NSEA President Nancy Fulton.

Praise is also due, said Fulton, to NSEA's staff in the areas of advocacy, research and UniServ – each of which work with and provide broad support to local associations as they bargain with local school boards.

But there is work yet to be done.

Details and figures on the charts on these two pages comes from NSEA's Advocacy and Research Departments, and represents figures for the current school year.

The charts serve two purposes: they provide factual, current information to NSEA members and negotiators; and they allow negotiators and individuals to make fact-based decisions as they begin negotiations in November under the new bargaining schedule outline in LB397.

The numbers are also useful to members searching for new employment. However, members in the job search mode would be wise to also ask questions about health care and other benefits provided by each school district's negotiated agreement.

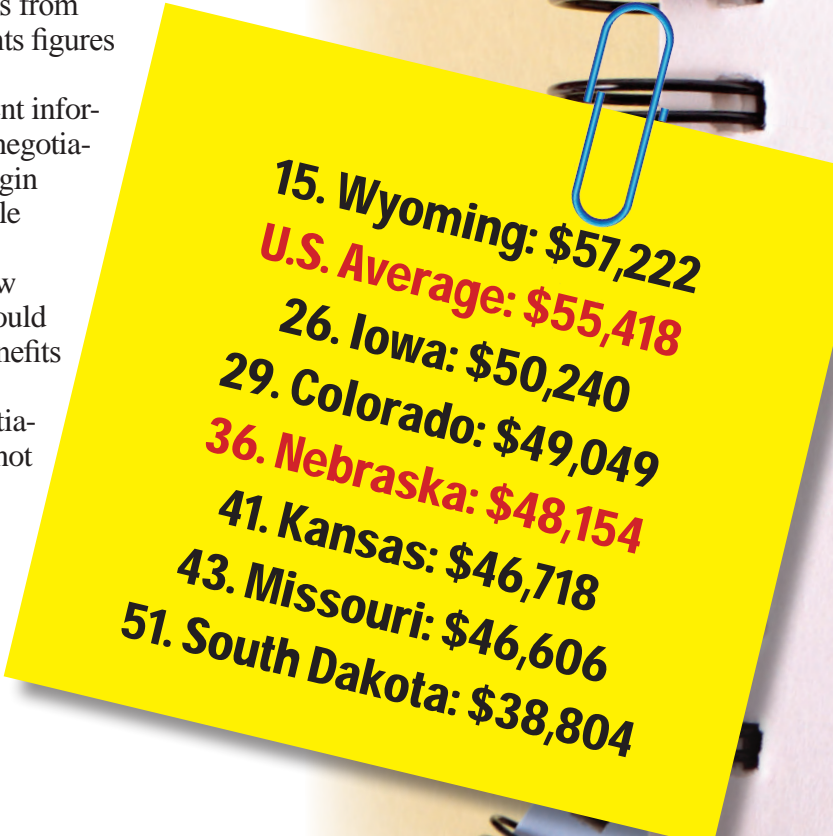
These numbers also provide benchmarks, and allow negotiators, in particular, to set goals based on competitive — and not just comparable or average — measurements.

This fact may also be of interest: 20 of the 25 schools listed in the Bottom 25 beginning salary list when NSEA first compiled these charts nearly 10 years ago have moved upward and off that listing.

The charts represent information from the state's nearly 250 K-12 school districts represented by an NSEA bargaining unit.

Questions? Reach NSEA's Larry Scherer or Al Koontz at:

larry.scherer@nsea.org
al.koontz@nsea.org

- 
- 15. Wyoming: \$57,222
 - U.S. Average: \$55,418
 - 26. Iowa: \$50,240
 - 29. Colorado: \$49,049
 - 36. Nebraska: \$48,154
 - 41. Kansas: \$46,718
 - 43. Missouri: \$46,606
 - 51. South Dakota: \$38,804

Starting Salaries

TOP 25

LINCOLN	\$39,099
WALTHILL	\$35,969
MILLARD	\$35,700
WINNEBAGO	\$35,619
OMAHA	\$35,256
WESTSIDE	\$35,200
HOMER	\$35,150
BLAIR	\$34,781
UMO'HO'N NATION	\$34,600
BENNINGTON	\$34,560
ESU NO 5-BEATRICE	\$34,533
COLUMBUS	\$34,500
NORFOLK	\$34,170
HARVARD	\$34,128
WALLACE 65R	\$34,128
HOLDREGE	\$34,117
ELKHORN VALLEY	\$34,020
NORRIS	\$33,960
RAYMOND CENTRAL	\$33,950
NORTH BEND CENTRAL	\$33,858
WILBER-CLATONIA	\$33,775
NORTH PLATTE	\$33,700
SOUTH SIOUX CITY	\$33,630
GERING	\$33,597
PAPILLION-LAVISTA	\$33,550

BOTTOM 25

O'NEILL	\$30,125
AMHERST	\$30,100
SHELTON	\$30,100
GREELEY-WOLBACH	\$30,050
ANSELMO-MERNA	\$30,000
ANSLEY	\$30,000
CALLAWAY	\$30,000
HYANNIS	\$30,000
MULLEN	\$30,000
ST. EDWARD	\$29,900
ALLIANCE	\$29,800
EWING	\$29,600
SPALDING	\$29,600
LOUP COUNTY	\$29,550
MINATARE	\$29,500
ESU NO 7-COLUMBUS	\$29,469
ARCADIA	\$29,403
CODY-KILGORE	\$29,400
ELBA	\$29,128
ARNOLD	\$29,100
SANDHILLS-DUNNING	\$29,050
SARGENT	\$29,000
ESU NO 17-AINSWORTH	\$28,960
SUTHERLAND	\$28,500
WHEELER CENTRAL	\$28,250

Master's Degree – Max

TOP 25

LINCOLN	\$73,007
OMAHA	\$69,721
TEKAMAH-HERMAN	\$62,216
PAPILLION-LAVISTA	\$61,732
ESU NO 11-HOLDREGE	\$61,544
FREMONT	\$59,402
BAYARD	\$58,900
RAYMOND CENTRAL	\$58,394
UMO'HO'N NATION	\$58,128
MALCOLM	\$58,080
RALSTON	\$58,050
HOWELLS-DODGE	\$57,904
SYRACUSE-DUNBAR-AVOCA	\$57,785
SHELBY	\$57,683
WEST POINT	\$57,649
HEMINGFORD	\$57,558
BRIDGEPORT	\$57,398
WISNER-PILGER	\$57,387
NORTH BEND CENTRAL	\$57,371
LYONS-DECATUR	\$57,362
ESU NO 10-KEARNEY	\$57,251
BELLEVUE	\$57,200
WINNEBAGO	\$56,990
ESU NO 3-OMAHA	\$56,943
LAKEVIEW COMMUNITY SCHOOLS	\$56,834

BOTTOM 25

SUTHERLAND	\$48,735
COLERIDGE	\$48,640
NEWCASTLE	\$48,640
SIOUX COUNTY	\$48,594
NORTH LOUP-SCOTIA	\$48,585
HAYES CENTER	\$48,585
WYNOT	\$48,560
CEDAR RAPIDS	\$48,506
NIORARA	\$48,336
ARCADIA	\$48,221
GREELEY-WOLBACH	\$48,080
HARVARD	\$48,032
MULLEN	\$48,000
RED CLOUD	\$47,970
LOUP COUNTY-TAYLOR	\$47,871
ALLIANCE	\$47,829
EWING	\$47,730
AMHERST	\$47,558
ST. EDWARD	\$47,242
MINATARE	\$47,200
STUART	\$47,120
LYNCH	\$46,208
SPALDING	\$46,176
CODY-KILGORE	\$45,864
ELBA	\$45,440

Salary Schedule – Max

TOP 25

LINCOLN	\$77,444
OMAHA	\$74,041
FREMONT	\$74,009
SYRACUSE-DUNBAR-AVOCA	\$72,644
COLUMBUS	\$71,426
PAPILLION-LAVISTA	\$71,294
NORTH PLATTE	\$71,107
NORFOLK	\$70,732
ESU NO 11-HOLDREGE	\$70,336
ESU NO 9-HASTINGS	\$70,024
BELLEVUE	\$68,900
ESU NO 15-TRENTON	\$68,799
ESU NO 6-MILFORD	\$68,368
GRAND ISLAND	\$68,364
GERING	\$68,319
NORRIS	\$68,260
ESU NO 4-AUBURN	\$67,925
SPRINGFIELD PLATTEVIEW	\$67,893
LEXINGTON	\$67,877
RALSTON	\$67,725
SOUTH SIOUX CITY	\$67,596
HOMER	\$67,488
ESU NO 3-OMAHA	\$67,433
ESU NO 16-OGALLALA	\$67,204
HERSHEY	\$67,053

BOTTOM 25

KENESAW	\$52,752
NEWMAN GROVE	\$52,718
AMHERST	\$52,675
STAPLETON	\$52,635
EWING	\$52,614
KEYA PAHA COUNTY	\$52,584
CEDAR RAPIDS	\$52,497
ELGIN	\$52,308
GREELEY-WOLBACH	\$52,287
NIORARA	\$52,152
ARTHUR COUNTY HS	\$52,080
LOUP COUNTY-TAYLOR	\$52,008
WEST BOYD UNIFIED	\$51,889
ANSELMO-MERNA	\$51,600
CODY-KILGORE	\$51,156
WHEELER CENTRAL	\$51,133
WYNOT	\$50,988
ARCADIA	\$50,867
SANDHILLS-DUNNING	\$50,257
MINATARE	\$49,855
ST. EDWARD	\$49,784
ELBA	\$49,518
SPALDING	\$48,840
LYNCH	\$48,640
STUART	\$48,360



Planning ahead: NSEA UniServ Director Marlene Wehrbein, left, met with Plattsmouth para-professionals ahead of a school board meeting in June. With Wehrbein, from left, are Joyce Foster, fourth grade special education para; Barb Wagner, academic associate para; Lynn Cadwell, elementary-level life skills para; Danita Ostransky, early childhood para; and fifth grade special education teacher Kelly Henry.

Plattsmouth Makes it Work

Rather Than Cut ESP Hours and Pay, NSEA Organizing Helps District Find Solution to Meet Affordable Care Act Requirements

This past summer, monumental battles were brewing in school districts across the country as school districts pondered the downsizing of Education Support Professionals' (ESPs') jobs or the cutting of ESP hours in order to dodge perceived penalties of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

ESP members of the Plattsmouth Education Association (PEA) and Plattsmouth Board of Education were at odds over how best to meet the PPACA's employer requirements. The board favored reducing hours, but the district's ESPs wanted to maintain student services and wage levels.

In June, the nine-member school board was ready to vote on a plan to avoid purchasing health insurance for employees who were not already covered by the district's group plan.

"They said they did not have the money available," said NSEA UniServ Director Marlene Wehrbein.

Finance committee board members offered a proposal to limit non-certified employees to 28 hours or less per week in any given week, a move designed to insulate the district against possible penalties for failing to offer them health benefits. According to the law, "full time" is defined as an average of 30 hours a week during a month.

ESPs hoping to recover resulting lost wages were to be offered the opportunity to work additional hours during the summer, and additional weeks during the year, to earn the same number of hours. Without the additional weeks, they would lose significant wages. But NSEA officials understood there were other options available.

"Our goal for ESPs was to have no loss of wages," said

"The kids wouldn't be as successful if we didn't have paras. Teachers can't be everywhere."
— Kelly Henry, Plattsmouth teacher

Wehrbein. "Most ESPs are covered by a spouses' policy."

Many Options Available

In Plattsmouth, NSEA considered that there are few months during a school year in which hourly employees get paid for a full day of work every single day, every week. The reason: spring break, winter break, federal holidays, training days, late-start or early release days.

"There are many options for finding solutions to the 30-hour work week dilemma. On the other side, we believed there would be a cost to students, employees and the district if they cut ESP hours," said Wehrbein.

"Our day is filled with student contact time," said Joyce Foster, a special education para-educator who spoke at the June board meeting. "Most paras have a morning duty, such as bus duty, the breakfast room, walking club, or drop off duty, (while others) have lunchroom duty along with recess duty every day. Which of these duties can be cut?"

Further, health insurance coverage was not the main issue. A reduction of up to nine work hours a week, on the other hand, would mean severe wage cuts over the course of a year.

A Position of 'Zero Power'

The PEA is a wall-to-wall Association that represents 88 percent of district teachers (133) and 19 ESPs, most of them para-educators. However, only teachers are recognized as a bargaining unit. In Plattsmouth, ESPs do not negotiate contracts; they serve as at-will employees.

"That is significant," said Wehrbein, "because they walked into the board meeting from a position of zero power."

Foster's husband, Tony, was one of several board members who met with Wehrbein to discuss possible solutions that would not cut ESP hours. In the weeks leading up to the decisive meeting, Wehrbein had arranged meetings with the su-

perintendent, district financial advisors, school attorney, board members, and Joel Solomon, a National Education Association (NEA) staff member and authority on the PPACA.

Over the past eight years, Wehrbein focused on helping PEA members advocate for themselves. Through grassroots organizing, they had garnered support from teachers, parents, patrons and several board members.

Allies and Friends

The day before the June board meeting, Wehrbein met with ESPs and urged them to invite allies to attend. More than 65 people showed up in support while eight ESPs read testimonials. Others e-mailed concerns to board members.

Danita Ostransky has worked as a para-educator at the district's early childhood center for more than 13 years.

"Para-educators in the early childhood building help keep the staff-to-child ratio within the recognized state ratio limit," Ostransky told the board.

Kelly Henry, a special ed teacher, said teachers cannot do their jobs effectively without para-educators by their side.

"The kids wouldn't be as successful if we didn't have paras," said Henry. "Teachers can't be everywhere."

After several amendments failed, board members passed a motion to allow support staff to work up to an average of 29 hours per week (1,189 hours per year) over the course of the school year.

Any amount of pay that would be lost due to total number of hours worked over the same 41-week period they worked last year would be recovered by increasing ESP pay. In other words, ESPs would earn no less in 2013-14 than they had in 2012-13, over the same number of weeks, even if they worked fewer hours.

The board OK'd the plan, understanding that the district will later increase the hourly pay for all support staff.

"The eventual solution adopted was a hybrid of several that had been discussed," Wehrbein said.

While school districts and other employers have another year until enforcement of other PPACA provisions, PEA illustrates the effectiveness of grassroots organizing under stressful conditions.

"Even though the board could have enacted what they initially proposed, and could have implemented that policy in a way that would have been very damaging, financially, to ESPs, it was our organizing efforts that got us a different result," Wehrbein said.

EHA Wellness Plan is NSEA Recommended

The Educators Health Alliance offers the EHA Wellness Program free of charge to any EHA-enrolled school district that wants to participate.

Recently, however, other groups have contacted school districts in an attempt to sell wellness programs. The information these groups offer is causing some confusion among EHA-member school districts. The no-cost EHA Wellness Program is the only wellness vendor recommended by NSEA.

The EHA provides a comprehensive, no cost wellness program. It includes a Personal Health Assessment, interventions addressing top health risks, incentives, training for wellness representatives and more.

Also, the EHA Board of Directors agreed to provide convenient biometric and vascular screenings beginning in 2014. The EHA has contracted with Life Line Screening to provide these services and will pay for any member

to be screened through Life Line. Non-members receive an EHA-only price.

Other non-EHA recommended companies may offer screenings free of charge, as they are Blue Cross Blue Shield providers and will "run the claims." However, there are pre-qualifications (time since the last screening, gender, age, etc) that are required for the screenings to be paid by BCBS. Even though the screening claim may be submitted by a vendor, there is no guarantee the claim will be paid, and the employee may receive a bill from BCBS that they will be required to pay out of pocket.

Again, if a district's employees are on the plan and are screened by Life Line, the EHA will pay for those screenings regardless of age, gender, prior screening status or other qualifications.

Questions? Contact EHA Field Representative Greg Long at 1-866-465-1342, 402-440-1358-cell or at:

greg@ehaplan.org



NET's Virtual Learning Library is your partner in and out of the classroom

NET's Virtual Learning Library offers:

- Classroom-ready access
- 30,000+ digital learning objects
- Searchable by subject, grade and media
- Appropriate for all ages, Pre-K – High School
- Credible, thorough and independent
- Lesson plan support and teacher tips
- Visual and interactive to engage students (videos, audio, image galleries and more)

Teachers will especially like the supplemental materials including lesson plans, learning objectives and ties to core standards. And a significant section is devoted to professional development activities for teachers. All this in one easy-to-use place, brought to you free by NET. More people turn to NET and PBS for effective, informational children's programming than any other location.


Learning Services

NET.pbslearningmedia.org

CRITICAL DEBATE

Legislative Studies on Taxes, State Aid Are Now Under Way.

The Results Will Affect You and Your Classroom.

For Nebraska's 49 state senators, the autumn months are typically slow and easy, a "calm before the storm" that begins when the Legislature convenes in January.

Not so this year.

Two critical studies of Nebraska's tax system are under way. On one side is an in-depth look at how the state collects tax dollars. On the other side is a review of the state aid to schools formula – how some of the state's tax dollars are distributed to school districts.

The results of the two interim studies, whether you teach kindergarten or college calculus, will affect your classroom and pocketbook for years to come.

To make certain that senators hear the interests of Nebraska students and teachers, NSEA leaders, members and staff attended and/or testified at each of the Legislature's five Tax Modernization Committee hearings and the Education Committee's six hearings reviewing the state aid formula.

NSEA also had NEA's chief economist, Richard Sims, offer expert testimony on the tax study. Sims is the former policy director of the non-partisan Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. He has also served as director of economic policy for both the Arkansas and Kentucky legislatures.

A state's tax system, said Sims, determines the state's future as much as anything that happens in a state.

"My concern is about the long-term implications of the tax system, how it determines the future of the state, how it affects education, the economy, and whether our children will be able to find good jobs when they graduate.

"The first principle of tax reform is 'do no harm,'" said Sims. "Make sure any changes you make are good for the state."

For the record, the state has reduced state aid to schools in recent years. State aid topped out at \$950 million four years ago; this year's total is \$906 million. Only about half of Nebraska's 249 school districts qualify for the aid, and the state ranks 49th in terms



Prepping: Michael Fryda, a teacher at Westside District 66 in Omaha, reviews his testimony with NSEA Field Director Lynne Elwood before speaking to the Legislature's Tax Modernization Committee.



Broderson

Gaffney

Lyons



of state dollars sent to public schools.

"The decisions policymakers eventually reach will be at least partially guided by what senators learn at these hearings," said NSEA President Nancy Fulton. "It is important that senators understand, through those of us in the classroom, how tax policy and state aid directly affects what happens in our classrooms."

NSEA is a member of Rebuild Nebraska, a coalition of like-minded organizations encouraging policymakers to return to Nebraska's tradition of sound investment in education, health care, roads and infrastructure.

"Such investments have fostered strong schools, a strong workforce and safe communities, attributes that allowed the state to weather the recent recession better than most other states," said Fulton. Coalition members include the Nebraska Hospital Association, AARP Nebraska, ConAgra Foods, the Nebraska Medical Association, the Center for Rural Affairs, and Building Bright Futures

Omaha.

While NSEA has been active at the interim hearings, the temperature will rise once the Legislature convenes in January.

"We will work to ensure the best possible outcome in terms of tax fairness and equity, and in terms of adequate state aid for Nebraska's education system, from pre-school to our colleges and universities," said Fulton.

Here is a synopsis of testimony from across the state:

Tax Modernization Study

Michael Fryda is a science teacher at **Westside District 66** in Omaha, and was Nebraska's 2009 Teacher of the Year. On



Talking taxes: At the Tax Modernization Committee's Lincoln visit were, from left, Jason Hayes, NSEA director of Governmental Public Policy; NSEA President Nancy Fulton; and Richard Sims, NEA's chief economist and a former policy director for the non-partisan Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy. Fulton and Sims offered testimony.

Oct. 17, he told the Tax Modernization Committee in Omaha that state-funded programs support many Westside children. Those programs include subsidized breakfast and lunch, after-school programs, intensive reading programs, tutoring, and anti-truancy efforts.

"These programs all cost money but the cost of not providing these programs is even greater in terms of our individual students' chance at success and ensuing societal costs," said Fryda. "We know that students who show up and do well in school are categorically better citizens. They are less likely to wind up in prison and they are more likely to be productive citizens who earn and return money to our local economies."

Fryda said he understands the committee's charge is to "modernize" the state's tax system.

"I do not believe that means we 'shrink the pie' – nor do I support 'shrinking the pie.' We need to have the revenues necessary to build roads, provide police and fire protection, educate our children, and take care of the elderly and those who are unable to take care of themselves," he said.

NSEA President Nancy Fulton urged the Tax Modernization Committee not to fall into the trap that has entangled Kansas legislators and citizens.

"Kansas made wholesale changes to its tax system and now the citizens of Kansas are facing a \$700 million budget shortfall that threatens their quality of life," said Fulton. "Severe cuts in funding to education and other essential public services are causing upheaval and are hurting the people of Kansas.

"I ask that you not take our state down that same path. Nebraska's tax policy needs to protect the good things we have going for us in our state. Maintaining and improving our public schools is critical to our future – and it is where we need to invest a significant portion of our tax dollars," said Fulton.

State Aid Study

Howard Gaffney, Anselmo, is a retired teacher and administrator, and now farms and ranches in that area. He spoke to the Legislature's Education Committee at Sandhills Public Schools in Dunning on Oct. 2.

Gaffney said it is important to recognize that good schools, colleges and the university have much to do with Nebraska's quality of life. He suggested a comprehensive study of the aid

'It's the People'

Sims: Nebraska Tax System Features 'Structural Deficit'

Richard Sims has studied state tax systems his entire professional career. He said three taxes have the most influence on Nebraska's future: the income tax, property tax, and sales and excise tax. All three have strengths and weaknesses.

Sims said the sales tax is fairly stable from year-to-year, but is regressive and hits the poor the hardest. Nor does it grow as fast as the economy.

The individual income tax is the only tax that grows faster than the economy, making up for taxes that grow more slowly. If legislators reduce or do away with the income tax, the state will have to cut services or raise rates every few years.

"Your current system has a structural deficit," he said. "You are condemned to year after year having to raise rates or cut services. If you put a little more emphasis on your individual income tax and make it a little more progressive, you will not be in any danger of hurting your economy."

"That's the big picture you are faced with – you need more reliance on income tax," he said. "The other taxes do not grow as fast as other states income taxes do."

States with no income tax – not including those like Wyoming that are driven by coal or other energy benefits – actually grow slower than states with an individual tax.

Sims also said careful study has shown no evidence of an exodus of millionaires from New Jersey after that state passed a "millionaire" tax.

Finally, Sims offered this advice regarding job creation and state investment in education:

"What causes firms to move and relocate? A study said 20 years ago it was labor costs, and it still is – if the firm is making t-shirts," said Sims. "But if the firm is producing anything else, the determining factor is the quality of the workforce. The CEO of General Electric was asked, 'what role do state and local taxes pay in your location?' He said 'None. The most important factor is training and education. It's the people.'"

formula to determine the true educational needs.

“I believe the study should include a focus on our rural schools as well as our urban schools. Both have some of the same needs and some different needs – all should be recognized in the formula. That might also provide aid to some districts that are currently not receiving any aid,” he said.

He also urged some of the state’s \$600 million surplus be set in an Education Trust Fund to help alleviate wild swings in state aid funding.

Deb Lyons is a first grade teacher at Hastings, and is president of the Hastings Education Association. She spoke to the Tax Modernization Committee at Hastings on Oct. 2. Lyons said state aid is “absolutely essential” to supplement property taxes.

“We cannot survive on our property tax revenue alone,” she said. “There are so many needs, and I see them in my classroom every day. Try as we may, my students sometimes suffer from their needs not being met.

“As you know, state aid not only helps to provide the classroom support we need to give our children a great education, it helps provide property tax relief for our citizens,” said Lyons.

Mike Broderson, Plattsmouth, teaches in **Bellevue** and

serves on the Plattsmouth Board of Education. He spoke in Omaha on Oct. 7. He said he sees, firsthand, the effect of classroom budget cuts.

“Larger class sizes are not beneficial to student learning. Adequate classroom resources – from books and paper to technology and teachers and teacher aides – are essential if we are to provide our students with a quality education,” he said.

He thanked the committee for leading the way in raising state aid last session, but said “state aid has not kept pace with the costs of operating the schools – and, as a school board member, I assure you that is putting more pressure on property taxes.”

Broderson urged that state aid be set a year in advance to help school districts prepare budgets.

At Crete on Oct. 7, **Fulton** told the Education Committee that NSEA supports a cost study to develop a research base for determining student needs; the creation of an Education Trust Fund to smooth out funding for schools; incentives to improve teaching and learning; and repeal of the budget lid.

“The current budget lid has not been fair to rural schools and has not reduced disparities in spending between schools,” she said.

Study: Let Teens Vote at Age 17

Bipartisan Commission Recommends Steps to Better Engage Young Americans in Democracy

Researchers based at Tufts University have released a report on how to educate young Americans for political participation in a time of deep polarization.

The report found too few young people engaged, and opportunities for civic learning and engagement are unequal.

The bipartisan Commission on Youth Voting and Civic Knowledge report offers ideas on engaging youth.

The commission reviewed data collected around the 2012 elections on issues like civic knowledge, voting behavior, and the educational experiences of more than 6,000 Americans ages 25 and under. Also reviewed were data from 720 high school civics or government teachers, and an analysis of all states’ voting and education laws.

“Teachers face an inhospitable climate for civics: tests and standards that do not reward discussing current events, considerable resistance from parents to anything touching politics, and a national political climate that alienates young people from public life,” said Tufts University’s Peter Levine. The study said:

■ **Current levels of engagement by youth are too low.** Less than half of young Americans vote, even in presidential elections, and 10 percent of those 18 to 24 met a standard of “informed engagement” in the 2012 election cycle.

■ **Opportunities for civic learning and engagement are**

unequal. White, wealthy students are up to six times as likely as low-income minority students to exceed the “proficient” level in civics.

■ **Civic education is increasingly seen as controversial.** A quarter of teachers surveyed thought that parents or other adults in their community would object if politics was discussed in their course — even though they were asked about a course on government or civics taught during a presidential election year.

“Research shows that civics education works. Discussing controversial issues, engaging in service learning if it involves discussion of ‘root causes,’ being contacted by parties and campaigns, and participating in extracurricular groups all predict good civic outcomes for students,” said Trey Grayson, former Kentucky secretary of state and director of the Harvard Institute of Politics.

Civic Education Vital to Democracy

Sadly, most states do not emphasize civic education in their schools, which includes learning about the U.S. Constitution, voting, jury duty, government, law, current events and related topics.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress tests revealed that only 27 percent of fourth-graders, 22 percent of eighth-graders, and 24 percent of 12th-graders performed at or above the proficient level in civics in 2010.

The non-profit American Board of Trial Advocates Foundation has produced *Justice by the People* as a free, downloadable, online resource with 10 lesson plans and an interactive game that looks at the basic freedoms of trial by jury and other liberties. Find it at:

www.Scholastic.com

To break these patterns, the report recommends:

■ Lowering the voting age to 17 in municipal or state elections so that students can be encouraged to vote while they are taking a required civics class.

■ Advancing policies to support teachers’ obligation to include discussions of current, controversial issues; assigning of students to read and debate news in class; and encouraging students to discuss issues with parents.

For more study details, go to:

www.civicyouth.org



Proudly serving
**Nebraska's
educators**
since 1967.



[nebraskablue.com](https://www.nebraskablue.com)

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska is an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.

SPRING COURSES | 2014

visit ecampus.unk.edu / register at myblue.unk.edu



ART 803-01 Art Education Research Methods
 ART 807P-01 Art Methods for Young Children
 ART 825-01 Intercultural Aesthetics & Pedagogical Practice
 ART 844-01 History, Theories & Philosophies of Art Education
 ART 846-01 Seminar in Art Education
 ART 848-01 Art for Students with Diverse Needs
 ART 855-01 Art Education in American Culture
 ART 861-01 Art of the Americas: Native American & Latino Art History
 ART 895-01 Art Education Research Paper
 BIOL 802 Organic Evolution (2 sections)
 BIOL 811-01 Scientific Illustration
 BIOL 812-01 Microbial Diversity
 BIOL 813-01 Issues in Bioethics
 BIOL 814-01 Plant Pathology
 BIOL 820-02 Introduction to Graduate Study
 BIOL 823-01 Environmental Biology
 BIOL 825-01 Tropical Island Biology
 BIOL 827-01 Biological Statistics
 BIOL 830P-01 ST: Plant Systems in Evolution
 BIOL 830P-02 ST: Virology
 BIOL 830P-04 ST: Desert Field Biology
 BIOL 830P-05 ST: Your Inner Fish
 BIOL 831A-01 Biological Research: Hypothesis & Justification
 BIOL 831B-01 Biological Research: Methodology
 BIOL 831C-01 Biological Research: Annotated Bibliography
 BIOL 831D-01 Biological Research: Data Collection
 BIOL 831E-01 Biological Research: Statistical Analysis
 BIOL 831F-01 Biological Research: Manuscript
 BIOL 839-01 Human Physiological Systems
 BIOL 863-01 Biological Perspectives
 BIOL 881 Current Issues in Biology (4 sections)
 CHEM 821-01 Inorganic Chemistry II for High School Teacher
 CSIS 828P-01 Data Communication & Distributed Processing
 CSIS 850P-01 E-Commerce Information Systems
 CSIS 858P-01 Computer Security
 CSIS 894P-01 Directed Research in Computer Science & Information Systems

CSP 804P-01 Counseling & Mental Disorders
 CSP 830-02 Professional Issues in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
 CSP 960-01 Globalization of School Psychology
 CSP 991-01 Scholarly Study
 EDAD 848 Curriculum Planning (2 sections)
 EDAD 853-01 School Business Management
 EDAD 854-01 Introduction to Educational Administration
 EDAD 859-01 Legal Bases of Education
 EDAD 869-01 The Principalship
 EDAD 870-01 Principal as Instructional Leader
 EDAD 898-01 Endorsement Internship
 EDAD 899P-01 ST: Introduction to Educational Administration Research
 EDAD 899P-02 ST: Athletic Director
 EDAD 940-01 Administrative Theory
 EDAD 944-01 Seminar in Educational Administration
 EDAD 957-01 Public School Finance
 FSID 886P-01 Families in Crisis
 HIST 801 America Interpreted (2 sections)
 HIST 803-01 Historical Methodst
 HIST 848 ST: The Great Depression (2 sections)
 HIST 848-02 ST: Museum & Historical Site Interpretation
 HIST 848-03 ST: U.S. in Cold War Era
 HIST 848-04 ST: Gilded Age
 HIST 849-01 ST: Age of Enlightenment
 HIST 849-02 ST: Imperialism
 HIST 849-03 ST: Gender & War
 HIST 849 ST: Nazi Germany (2 sections)
 HIST 849-05 ST: Medieval Europe
 MKT 837P-01 Sales Management
 MUS 802P-01 Music History & Theory Review
 MUS 814-01 Aesthetics of Music
 MUS 897-01 Graduate Capstone Project: Directed Studies
 SFED 310-01 Driving Task Analysis
 SFED 430-01 Developing Driver Education Classroom Skills
 SFED 431-01 Developing Driver Education Vehicle Skills (Lecture)
 SFED 431-02 Developing Driver Education Vehicle Skills (Lab)

SPAN 808P-02 Comparative Grammar
 SPAN 870P-01 Seminar in Spanish/Latin American Studies
 TE 800 Educational Research (3 sections)
 TE 803 Philosophy of Education (2 sections)
 TE 804 Curriculum Development in Multicultural Education (2 sections)
 TE 805P-01 Overview of Assistive Technology
 TE 810 Design & Development of Instruction (2 sections)
 TE 826-01 Content Methods & Strategies for Teaching English as a Second Language
 TE 831P-01 Professional Skills & Knowledge I
 TE 832-01 Professional Skills & Knowledge II
 TE 833-01 Context of Education
 TE 836-01 Post-Baccalaureate Student Teaching
 TE 845-01 Contemporary Theory & Practice in Reading
 TE 846-01 Diagnosis/Correction of Reading Difficulties
 TE 853C-01 Improvement of Instruction in Elementary School Language Arts
 TE 854-01 Reading in the Content Areas
 TE 857-01 Early Communication, Language & Literacy
 TE 871-01 Collection Development & Management
 TE 875-01 Administration of the School Library
 TE 878-01 Leadership in Instructional Technology
 TE 886P Technology Tools for Teachers (2 sections)
 TE 887-01 Electronic Media Production
 TE 899P-01 ST: Motivating 21st Century Learners
 TESE 821P-01 Nature & Needs of Exceptionalities
 TESE 826-01 Program Design for Gifted/Talented Education
 TESE 830-01 Consultation & Collaboration with Families & Agencies Serving Individuals with Disabilities
 TESE 840-01 Bilingual Special Education
 TESE 861-01 Legal Issues in Special Education
 TESE 863-01 Research Based Instructional Strategies for Students with Disabilities
 TESE 867-01 Applied & Functional Behavior Analysis
 TESE 875P-01 Curriculum Content for Secondary Students with Disabilities

BEST
ONLINE PROGRAMS

U.S. News & World Report

GRAD EDUCATION

2013

Graduate Online Programs for Educators in...

- Art Education
- Biology
- Curriculum & Instruction
- Driver Education
- Education Administration
- ESL
- History
- Instructional Technology
- Music Education
- Physical Education
- Reading PK-12
- Science/Math
- Spanish Education
- Special Education

NSEA Field Staff Give You an Edge

They Work to Solve Issues, Answer Your Questions

They've been in the classroom, they know your routine and they can answer your questions, no matter how unique or mundane.

"They" are NSEA's 18 field staffers who deliver front line services to NSEA's nearly 28,000 members statewide. That's the NSEA Edge – the benefit that no other professional education organization can provide.

Whether your question is about your salary schedule, personal leave or your contract, your NSEA field staff representative is the first person you should contact when you have a question about your job — especially if your job or teaching certificate are threatened. The field staff program is the heart of NSEA's service to members, and with 18 field staffers scattered across the state, assistance is always close at hand.

For instance, in recent weeks, NSEA field staff have dealt with these questions, submitted by members through the NSEA website:

"I'm an NSEA member and I want information about

whether or not I could add my fiancé to the NEA term life insurance policy, or how I sign up for that. I don't know whether we had to wait until we are married in June or not. Thank you!"

"I'm certified as a K-12 music teachers. Can my district schedule me to teach a Pre-K class?"

"Our Alpha Delta Kappa teacher sorority would like to come to Lincoln for a day, have lunch at the Governor's Mansion and then meet with a representative from NSEA about education issues in Nebraska and visit the Capital to see the legislature in session.

"Can you help us organize a day like this?"



These are just some of the broad and diverse questions posed to NSEA field staff each day. Field staff are located across the state, from Omaha to Scottsbluff. In the case immediate, urgent assistance is needed, contact NSEA Headquarters at 1-800-742-0047, where a field staff member is always on duty. In Omaha, call 402-731-0800. In Lincoln, call 402-489-7500.

Or, use the 'Contact Us' link on the NSEA website at:

www.nsea.org

Pittman, Sears Join Association Family

Pittman is Field Director for High Plains Unit; Sears Joins LEA Staff

The NSEA family welcomed two new faces on board in recent weeks, both ready and willing to work for and serve members.

Matt Pittman taught for the Arlington Public Schools for 16 years, and joins NSEA as the field director serving the High Plains Field Director Unit, which covers southwestern Nebraska and the southern half of the panhandle to the Wyoming border.

Pittman takes the High Plains Unit formerly served by Kristen Sedlacek, who assumed similar duties in the Tri Cities Unit (Kearney, Hastings and Grand Island area) upon Midge Dublinske's retirement in August.

Pittman has taught at the elementary, middle school and high school levels during his time at Arlington, and spent the past four years teaching fifth and sixth grade science. His résumé also includes coaching football, boys' basketball and boys' and girls' track. When the Arlington schools began a high school baseball team in 2010, Pittman was selected as head coach, a position he held for the past four



Pittman



Sedlacek



Sears

years. He also taught in Grand Island one year.

A native of Arlington, he is a graduate of Doane College. He has been an NSEA member all of his teaching career, and served the past six years as chief negotiator for the Arlington Education Association. Pittman is also a longtime member of the Nebraska Coaches Association.

Pittman said he looks forward to working with NSEA members.

"I always thought it would be a great opportunity to assist others, to help teachers to be able to be better at their job," he said.

"This job is as interesting as anything you can do, and I feel like I'm helping teachers and affecting public education in Nebraska for the better," he said.

Pittman and his wife, Gleone, have three children.

Also on board is Emily Sears, the new associate staff for governance and government relations for the Lincoln Education Association. Sears will work with the LEA's annual Harvest of Books project, scholarships, LEA board and other meetings, and will assist the LEA president in governance and government relations work.

Bellevue's Rogers Takes EMAC Helm

Bellevue sixth grade teacher Ginger Rogers has been appointed to serve as the 2013-14 chair of NSEA's Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee (EMAC).



Rogers

EMAC is charged with promoting respect and understanding of minority and ethnic groups and their involvement in NSEA activities.

EMAC secretary is Alberta Nelson of Omaha. The vice chair post is vacant at the moment.

Other committee members include American Indian/Alaska Native representatives Susan Townsend, Lincoln, and Vida Stabler, Umo^{ho} Nation; Asian/Pacific Islander representatives Susan Loney, Omaha, and Bob DeHart, York College; Black representatives Sharon Bell, Lincoln, and Broderick Steed, Umo^{ho} Nation; and Hispanic representatives Jose Hernandez, Norfolk, and Edward Ventura, Omaha. NSEA Field Staff member Carol Hicks will advise the committee, and NSEA Administrative Assistant Tamra Mick will also work with EMAC.

The committee will plan and implement programs that promote:

- Minority leadership training.

- Minority student achievement.
- Respect of minority and ethnic cultural differences.

The recruitment of minority members to participate in NEA RA and other Association governance activities.

Policies related to issues of concern to minorities and ethnic groups by recommending policy to the NSEA Board of Directors.

Recruitment of minorities and ethnic groups into the teaching profession.

The next EMAC meeting will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Nov. 2, at the Omaha Education Association office. Connect with EMAC on Twitter: @twitter.com/EMAC_NSEA or on Facebook.

A Better Deal: Toyota Moves to New Location

Fleet Corporate Pricing For NSEA Members

A year ago, NSEA entered into an agreement with Old Mill Toyota that allows NSEA members to purchase new cars at pre-arranged, fleet corporate pricing, which falls below dealer cost.

In a few weeks, the deal gets better!

Old Mill Toyota will move west on Dodge Street in Omaha to a site that will more than triple the lot size, more than triple the number of service bays, and provide more service and selection to customers. Old Mill Toyota will become Village Point Toyota-Scion, adding the Scion brand to the selection.

"This will be the newest dealership in the state, and we'll go from one of the smallest Toyota dealerships in the company's Kansas City region to one of the two or three largest," said Jason Fricke, corporate and business sales director.

The new site, north of Dodge Street and west of 180th Street, will include a huge customer lounge with complimentary WiFi access and a free shuttle to nearby Village Pointe shops.

The agreement with NSEA covers all makes and models of the Toyota brand. Through a sister dealership, Husker Auto Group, NSEA members will also have access to a similar pricing structure for all makes and models in the GMC, Cadillac, Chevrolet,

Mercedes Benz and BMW product lines.

NSEA members buy at the pre-arranged, fleet corporate pricing, considerably less than the manufacturer's suggested retail — or "window sticker" — price on dealer lots. Members also receive factory incentives advertised at the time of sale.

"This is fleet business pricing, which is the pricing that corporations



and businesses that buy many vehicles at a time qualify for and pay," said Fricke.

Fricke said discounts may also be available on pre-owned automobiles. For details, e-mail Fricke at:

jfricke@employerprice.com

Browse through the available listings at these websites:

www.oldmilltoyota.com
www.huskerautomotive.com

NEBRASKA CLASSROOMS CAN WIN A DAY @ THE FARM

Teachers and their classrooms, grades K-12, are invited to submit a video by Nov. 15, 2013 answering the question **What would your life be like without Nebraska Agriculture?** Three classrooms will be selected as grand prize winners from across the state.

Winning classrooms will receive an all expense paid field trip to farms or ranches near their school as well as a surprise lunch congratulating them!

Visit nefb.org to enter!

Entries due Nov. 15, 2013.







Save With Dave!

Just like it's a good idea for you to review your life and other insurance holdings on a regular basis, I like to review the insurance offerings of NEA Member Benefits on a regular basis. This month I offer a rundown on some of the top insurance plans – life, auto and other – offered by NEA Member Benefits.



Glenn

First is the **NEA Group Term Life Insurance Plan**, issued by the Prudential Insurance Company of America.

The plan offers low monthly premiums at group discounted rates, with flexible coverage levels of from \$25,000 to \$500,000. Benefits remain level until the policy holder reaches age 70.

The **NEA Level Premium Group Term Life Insurance Plan** offers coverage amounts of up to \$1 million, with 10-, 15- and 20-year terms. The plan offers lower rates for most coverage amounts and terms, with full coverage up to age 80 – and premiums that won't increase due to age and benefits that won't decrease for the entire term. Spouse or domestic partner coverage is also available.

The **NEA Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance Plan** has optional coverage for family members and rates starting at \$19 per year to go along with up to \$130,000 in coverage at home or away. The plan offers up to \$520,000 for any covered accident on a plane, train, ship or other public conveyance. The plan offers guaranteed acceptance, no medical exams required. In addition, each year, for the first five years of coverage, the benefit payable for covered accidents on a public conveyance will increase \$10,000.

Finally, the **NEA Guaranteed Issue Life Plan** offers guaranteed acceptance for members and spouses ages 45 and older, no medical exam, no health questions. Choose one of two plans: Up to \$10,000 or \$20,000 worth of decreasing term life insurance, regardless of your health, depending on your age.

Check out all of these NEA Member Benefits insurance plans at the NEAMB website at:

neamb.com

David Glenn is Nebraska's NEA Member Benefits representative.

Tips to Avoid 'Skimming' Scams

Don't Allow Thieves to Steal Debit Card Data

Identity thieves are always finding new and creative ways to steal your personal information. But one old scheme continues to snag unsuspecting victims: card skimming. In its simplest version, the bad guys grab card numbers by planting devices, known as skimmers, that read and copy the data on a debit or credit card's magnetic strip. In other cases, the crooks pay employees to reswipe customers' cards through a skimmer.

More than 60 percent of card skimming occurred at ATMs in 2012, according to a recent FICO report. Thieves disguise the skimmer, often by placing it over the ATM's actual card reader. Then, to record PINs as cardholders enter them, they install a tiny camera that has a view of the keypad or an overlay on top of the keys to log strokes. Before you swipe your card, check for signs of tampering by pulling on the card reader and its surrounding area to see if anything shifts or pops off. As you punch in your PIN with one hand, shield the keypad with the oth-

er to block the view of any camera.

Most important, review your credit card and bank statements to spot suspicious transactions. When possible, use a credit card rather than a debit card at potentially vulnerable payment terminals, such as gas pumps, or if the card will disappear from your sight — say, when a restaurant server carries your plastic to the register. Credit card transactions have stronger federal protections against fraud; your liability is limited to \$50 (American Express, Discover, MasterCard and Visa have zero-liability policies). Your bank will likely reimburse you for a fraudulent debit card transaction that you report promptly, but you'll have to do without the money until the refund comes through.

© 2013 The Kiplinger Washington Editors; Brought to you by NEA Member Benefits.

Content provided by:

Kiplinger

POWER UP YOUR CLASSROOM

NPPD's energy educators bring energy to life in the classroom. Plug into their resources — designed to help teachers meet many science standards.

For more information, visit nppd.com/energy-education



Jennifer Swerczek

jlswerc@nppd.com
402-336-2701



Chad Johnson

cejohns@nppd.com
402-604-1112

Nebraska Public Power District

Answer:

Because They're Good at What They Do

The Question Is:

Why Should You Nominate a Colleague for an NSEA Award?

Do you have a colleague who does outstanding work?
Of course you do!

Any NSEA member may nominate a deserving individual or group for the awards listed here, to be presented at the 2014 NSEA Delegate Assembly. All nominations must be postmarked by Friday, Jan. 31, 2014, and should be sent to: NSEA Awards, 605 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508-2742. Nominations may also be submitted online, with any required supporting material mailed to the NSEA. Online nomination forms are at the 'Call for Nominations' link on the website at:

www.nsea.org

NSEA members are eligible for these awards:

- **NSEA Rookie of the Year:** To honor a first-year teacher who sparkled in the 2012-13 school year.
- **Award for Teaching Excellence:** To honor a teacher who has excelled in the classroom over a long period of time.
- **Education Support Professional of the Year:** To honor an ESP who has excelled in his or her job.

Finalists will be notified in March, with the winners announced at the Delegate Assembly in Kearney on April 11-12. Each receives a \$250 cash award. The Teaching Excellence recipient also competes for the NEA Teaching Excellence Award.

Though there are no cash awards for these honors, NSEA members are also eligible for the following:

■ **Great Plains Milestone Award:** Honors an individual/group for promoting human and civil rights.

■ **Community Service:** Honors NSEA members and/or local associations involved in volunteer work outside of classroom hours.

■ **Local Public Relations:** Honors local associations for communication within the association, and promotion of educational excellence.

These awards will also be presented at Delegate Assembly in Kearney:

■ **Friend of Ed:** Local associations are encouraged to nominate an individual or group that has made a *statewide* contribution to education.

■ **Media:** Recognizes a newspaper, television or radio station for outstanding work in covering education issues and promoting community involvement in education. An essay of no more than 200 words explaining the nominee's qualifications must accompany each entry.

For more details, go to:

nsea.org

Children's Fund Award, Part II

NSEA's 2013 Delegate Assembly marked the first time an award was bestowed honoring member generosity and the NSEA Children's Fund.

The Plainview Education Association received an award as the local association that gave the most cash, per member, to the Children's Fund during the preceding year. The Bellevue Education Association received an award for giving the Children's Fund the most cash, in total.

Those awards will be presented again in 2014. How will your Association fare? Learn more about the fund on Page 2.

Earth & Life Science Educators



November 6
Lake Tahoe: Can We Save It?



November 13
America's Energy Future



November 20
Next Meal: Engineering Food

QUEST

Deepening understanding of today's most pressing sustainability topics
Wednesdays at 9 p.m. CT on NET1

Educational content provided across multiple platforms – television, radio & web

questscience.org

net
Television

Quest is a multi-state initiative, which includes NET, and is funded by the National Science Foundation, focusing on how science addresses sustainability issues.

Which Direction?

There is an intersection a few blocks from my house that is difficult to navigate, especially when the signs say “Do Not Turn Right, Do Not Go Straight, Do Not Turn Left, and Do Not Make a U-Turn.” It reminds me of the confusion about directions for our public schools. Which direction should we take?

Clearly, both the American public and the school community want a good school and a good education for every child. But there is significant criticism about achievement levels of students in our schools. Answers are often focused on the professional performance of teachers and principals, the design of the curriculum, or structural aspects of public education, such as length of the school year or policies about student retention. These are not easy topics. They do not result in easy answers.

Too often, like the intersection near my house, the directions don't allow any movement at all. There is no simple answer to the issue of student performance. The compounding problem is that proposed policy directions often make the issue of school improvement more confusing...and practical answers even more elusive. Are there directions that make sense?

Understanding 'Educationese'

Every person is a stakeholder in the success of American schools. Unfortunately, when policy-makers at the state or school district levels consider policy changes, community stakeholders are too often not engaged in any genuine conversations about their ideas or desires for their schools.

Yes, there are surveys, “input” sessions, hearings, or even professionally-facilitated focus groups to get what becomes limited information from constituents. But there is very little deep conversation or a public space for that conversation on our common hopes for public schools. A significant factor in the distance between the community and our schools is that few speak the official language. No, that language isn't English.

It is “educationese” that is spoken in the education policy community and understood by virtually no one outside of that inner circle. Acronyms, commercially-branded terms,

cutesy names for common-sense ideas, and district-specific vocabulary all inhibit conversations within and between communities. SEL, self-directed learning, HOW, PSE, self-regulated learning, STAR, Common Core, gradual release, and LLI are not terms that simplify or explain — they are barriers to broad community understanding of school issues. If schools want to have meaningful conversations with the community, teachers and principals must stop speaking in a language that excludes the community.

Major Differences

Public schools reflect the vitality, engagement — and support — of their neighborhood partners. The contentious issues around student performance in our schools cannot be resolved by anything less than deep engagement of schools with the local community. Moving to critical policy discussions requires a clear sense of direction. If American public schools are ever going to rise above the periodic — and disruptive — policy swings between either a focus on higher-order thinking or a focus on teaching

to the bottom, we will have to collectively agree on a long-term direction for steady improvement.

Major differences between the approach of the American system and that of higher-achieving countries lie in other countries' long-term direction and steady focus on assessing how students can apply what they have learned. If there are any secrets to student success, they are not found in multiple-choice tests that are developed outside the local community.

As this country continues to struggle under *No Child Left Behind*, we need to make sure that we do not jump from one ill-conceived national policy to another. The road signs are confusing — but if we don't know where we should be going, we won't know if our directions are right or not. Before we listen to those who think they know the answers, let's make sure we know where we want to go with the future of American education. For every school community, that means conversations that count. Insist on them.



Many Directions, Little Movement: NSEA Executive Director Craig R. Christiansen trying to figure out directions at a Nebraska intersection.

Learn About Medicare, EHA Options

Two More Seminars Scheduled for November Dates

If you're seeking information on Medicare and pre-age 65 health care coverage, you still have at least a couple of opportunities to learn the details through the NSEA-Retired.

The meetings will provide important information about Medicare, NSEA-Retired BlueSenior Classic (our Medicare supplement), and the options that retirees younger than 65 have for insurance through the Educator's Health Alliance (EHA).

Seminars are scheduled in both Scottsbluff and Norfolk in early November. In October, seminars were held in North Platte, Kearney and Omaha.

The Norfolk seminar will include a morning session on Medicare from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m., and an afternoon session on the Educators Health Alliance program, beginning at 1:30 p.m. and ending around 3:30 p.m. The Scottsbluff session will include only the morning sectional on Medicare changes.

The Medicare session will cover the basics of Medicare; changes in Medicare for 2014; details of NSEA-Retired BlueSenior Classic, the Medicare supplement endorsed by NSEA-Retired and underwritten by Blue Cross (with optional dental coverage); changes in Medicare Part D, the prescription drug benefit, for 2014; and how to use the Medicare website to find an appropriate Part D provider.

The EHA afternoon session at Norfolk will cover the differences between the four EHA health care plan options available to retirees younger than 65. Health Savings Accounts will also be explained, as well as how to enroll in an HSA for plans that qualify for one.

Remaining sessions are set for:

- Saturday, Nov. 9, at the Scottsbluff Hampton Inn.
- Tuesday, Nov. 12, at the Northeast Community College Lifelong Learning Center in Norfolk.

Local Retired Association News for 2013-14

Below are details on more of the NSEA-Retired local affiliates.

Platte Valley Retired Education Association

Officers: President Mary Ann Niemoth, Vice President Martha McGahan, Secretary LaVila Van Boening, Treasurer Christy Hewitt, Communications Jim McGahan.

Annual dues for the 55 members: \$10.

In September, the group met at the Hastings YMCA for a Photo Safari of Kenya by Tim and Pam Smith.

Planned activities include: Nov. 6 at 2 p.m. at the Grand Island Platte Valley State Bank for Past Days at the North Platte Canteen; Feb. 5 at 2 p.m. at the Hastings YMCA for Crane Season at the Rowe Sanctuary, with Keanna Leonard; and May 1 at 2 p.m. at the Grand Island Platte Valley State Bank for Experiences as Immigrants from India, with Sam and Ella Rothod.

Issues of concern: at the September meeting, members voted to give \$1,000 to the NSEA Children's Fund.

Omaha Education Association-Retired

Officers: President Cheryl Rich-

ardson; Vice President Walta Sue Dodd; Secretary-Treasurer Dee Rankin; Members-at-Large, Richard Hood, Sharon Hayenga, Ruby Davis and Scott McGinty; Bookkeeper, Roger Rea.

The OEA-R has 821 members, and dues are \$10 per year or \$100 for a life membership.

Meetings held monthly at the OEA building, and planned activities include: Taxes, by Pat O'Malley, on Dec. 5, 9:30 a.m. to noon; insurance issues, March 20, 2014, 9:30 a.m. to noon; and travel, on May 15, 2014, 9:30 a.m. to noon.

Issues of concern include: taxes, Social Security, charter schools, insurance and the needs of today's teachers.

Panhandle Education Association-Retired

Officers: President Jadie W. Giorgis, Vice President Joan Dietz, Secretary Earladeen Walker, Treasurers Gordon and Shirley Whartman.

The group was unable to have any meetings last year, and did all their correspondence by mail. They hope to become active again this year.

—Renae Kelly, Editor
renaekelly@gmail.com

Nebraska State Reading Association presents

LITERACY TO THE CORE!

Reading • Writing
Listening • Speaking

February 20-22, 2014
Ramada Inn • Kearney, NE

Featuring Literacy Experts
Brenda Overturf, Laura Robb and
Enrique Feldman

and Authors
Adam Gidwitz, Denise Brennan-Nelson,
Bill Harley and Barbara Kerley

Visit www.nereads.org/conference
for more information on our speakers
and registration details.



NSEA at 150: The Search is On!

Sesquicentennial Event is Near; Association Memorabilia is Sought

In 2017, the Nebraska State Education Association will hit a milestone that few professional organizations – and none in Nebraska – can claim: 150 years of service to members.

A small group of educators met in Brownville on Oct. 16, 1867, to adopt a constitution, elect a president and begin a commitment, in their words, to “...elevating the profession of teaching and promoting the interests of schools in Nebraska.”

That Brownville meeting formally launched the Nebraska State Teachers Association, even though planning meetings had been held as early as 1865. The 1867 beginning predates the Nebraska Medical Association, founded in 1868, and the Nebraska Bar Association, a late-comer, founded in 1936.

That the NSTA had some clout from the beginning is evident: Robert W. Furnas, Nebraska’s third governor, was the first president of the NSEA. At the second NSTA meeting in 1868, members directed the president to appoint a committee to write school law for the year-old state, and to present the proposed laws to the Legislature.



Clearly, NSEA has a long and vibrant history. What NSEA does not have, unfortunately, is a deep archive of papers, buttons, photographs or other items of an historical nature.

As work is under way to plan a sesquicentennial celebration, the Association is also working to build a tangible record of the past. In recent years, the association has been fortunate to obtain a handful of buttons and ribbons worn by delegates to association meetings between 1920 and 1940. But other documents or memorabilia has been more difficult to find, much less to obtain for the permanent archives.

In 1997, NSEA Executive Director Craig R. Christiansen wrote and published an account of the Association’s first 130 years.

“As we approach the 150th anniversary, we’re looking for items to document and illustrate the organization’s past,” he said. “If members have items of historical nature, or know that Aunt Julia might still have her program from the 1939 NSTA convention, we’re interested.”

Members are also asked to be on the lookout at antique stores, or auctions, for items that might be of interest.

For details, call the NSEA at 1-800-742-0047 and ask for Al Koontz, or e-mail to:

al.koontz@nsea.org

Elkhorn Teacher to Receive Teaching Excellence Honor

NEA Foundation to Reconize Miller

Kimberly Miller, a fifth grade teacher at Elkhorn’s Manchester Elementary School, is a recipient of the California Casualty Award for Teaching Excellence, one of the nation’s highest honors for public school educators. She is one of 36 teachers to be cited at the NEA Foundation’s Salute to Excellence in Education Gala in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 7.

“Educators like these are critical to their students’ academic success, and they deserve recognition,” said Harriet Sanford, NEA Foundation president and CEO.

Miller was nominated by the NSEA. Photos and names of all of the awardees are on the NEA Foundation website. Each awardee’s school will receive a \$650 award.

From the 36 state awardees, five finalists will be selected to receive \$10,000 cash awards. One finalist will be named the nation’s top educator and receive an additional \$25,000.

The Foundation and the NEA present the awards with aid from California Casualty, NEA Member Benefits, Pearson Foundation, and the Horace Mann Educators’ Corporation.

The NEA Foundation website is at:

www.neafoundation.org



Miller

In the News: Seward, Arnold, Maxwell

Students in the **Seward High School** Class of 2013 learned something about philanthropy before they were loosed on the world. They elected to send \$250 from their class treasury to benefit the NSEA Children’s Fund.

NSEA member and **Maxwell** teacher **Missy Friend** received a John Russell Applegate Grant to purchase an iPod Touch for each student to use in her classroom.

“I have some time with a para-educator daily and a parent volunteer who comes in once a week, but it is not always a consistent schedule,” she said. “I wanted to have help in developing skills and to differentiate the learning for each child in my classroom. What better way than to use technology?”

Friend said the variety of applications available allows children to build knowledge and develop computer literacy.

“The iPod is easy to use and I can load them with all sorts of apps to help the students with letters, numbers, writing, sight words, reading and more,” she said.

The grant was administered by the Mid-Nebraska Community Foundation.

Members of the **Arnold Education Association** have helped lift their school’s athletic program to new heights. The AEA gave \$500 to help the school district pay for crane rental for the football field’s stadium seating.

What good work has your local association completed recently? Let us know; send details to: al.koontz@nsea.org

What's Your Advice to a New Teacher?

Veterans Suggest Patience, Deep Breaths

What advice would you give to a beginning teacher?

That was the question posed recently on NSEA's Facebook page, and the responses from veteran teachers were superb!

■ From Colleen Coram: "Be patient with yourself. You are a work in progress. Teaching is not easy and you will find your way."

■ Lindsay Wilson said "You will make mistakes! It's only tragic when you don't learn anything from it."

■ Said Jaime Jones: "Get to know your student's and their parent's names. Learn something about each one. Remind them how important they are to you and your year will go wonderfully."

■ Amy Copper Sabatka's advice: Make friends with the ESPs, especially the maintenance and office people. They know where everything in the school is and help keep things running. Don't forget to breathe, reflect and set time for yourself."

■ Nikkie Trahan-Ferris agreed: "Trust yourself. Know that you CAN do it! And breathe!"

■ Edward Ventura Jr. advised that parental contact is vital. Also that it is wise to "Ask your classroom neighbor or someone — nothing is a stupid question (it only makes you a better teacher).

To learn more and to 'like' NSEA's Facebook page, go to Facebook and search for facebook.com/NSEA.org.

Speaking of Teaching

"Statistically, a high school dropout has a greater chance of going to prison than a smoker has of contracting lung cancer."

— **Robert P. Crouch, Jr.**,
U.S. District Attorney,
quoted in the *Virginia Journal of Education*, September 1997



Visit NSEA @ Facebook, Win \$50!

Mailed By: The Nebraska State Education Association
Suite 200, 605 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508-2742

Family of Teachers



Nine for teaching: These nine members of the Clinch family have years of experience across the state.

Standing in the back row, from left, are Jerry Clinch, who taught and coached for 17 years at Hyannis, Ravenna, Columbus Scotus, Platte Community College, the University of Nebraska and Southeast Community College; Warren Ferrel, who taught instrumental music for more than 30 years, including time at Omaha Central High, and Lewis and Clark Middle School and Alice Buffet Magnet Middle School; Rick Lempp, who taught for 13 years at Kearney Catholic High, Sumner and at Bellevue.

Standing, front row, from left: Judy Clinch who taught at Hyannis, Ravenna and a parochial school in Columbus; Brenda Clinch Perrea, who taught at parochial schools for seven years before joining the Waterloo Public Schools staff four years ago; Kelsey Horner, an elementary teacher in the Elkhorn Public Schools and a graduate of the CADRE master's degree program; Regina Clinch O'Connor, who taught in Atkinson, Central City, Holt County District 231 and now substitutes in Kearney; Julie Clinch Frazier, who taught for 36 years at Bellevue; and Micki Clinch Lempp, who taught for 35 years at Bellevue.

If you have a family of teachers, snap a photo and send it to Family of Teachers, c/o NSEA, 605 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508.

Simple Rules

From Diane Postman, a teacher at Yorktown, VA:

"I wanted to simplify my classroom rules, and managed to narrow them down to one word: Respect. If you show respect for others, yourself, and property, all rules are covered. I spent the first few weeks of school reviewing what respect means. We also listened to "Respect," by Aretha Franklin. Throughout the year, when I wanted to remind students of my expectations or let them know that they were stepping over a line, I simply said, 'respect.' It was very effective."

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

