

THE

VOICE

The Nebraska State Education Association ❖ October 2013



SUCCESS!

Neligh-Oakdale's complicated path to reach a settlement.

Plus:
Education Chair
Senator Sullivan
Addresses NSEA
Board of Directors

Check out the
**POSTER
INSIDE**

Upcoming Assignments

Blue Cross Scholarships

Oct. 12

■ **What:** Working to improve your skills or gain additional endorsements? The Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska scholarship program can help you defray the cost of the coursework.

■ **Details:** The deadline is Oct. 12. To apply, go to www.nsea.org.

Advocacy Conference

Oct. 18-19

■ **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 the Midtown Holiday Inn, Grand Island. For details, call your UniServ director at 1-800-742-0047, or check the story on Page 10.

NSEA-Retired Fall Conference

Oct. 23

■ **What:** Wine, preserving old photos, the North Platte Canteen — all are on the agenda for the annual NSEA-Retired Fall Conference at the Institute of Culinary Arts in Omaha.

■ **Details:** Learn more, and find out how to register for the conference on Page 22.

GreenSchools Program Offers Hands On Learning

Students Get Involved in School-Setting Labwork

GreenSchools, a program for students from kindergarten through grade 12, encourages students to take personal responsibility for improving the quality of their school, home and community environment.

GreenSchools consists of five student-led investigations designed for the school setting, but also includes elements that allow students to apply what they learn in their home environment. Investigations include:

■ **Energy:** Investigate a school's energy use, main sources of that energy, and propose energy-saving strategies;

■ **Water:** Research source, cost and quality of a school's water supply and implement enhancements to current conservation practices;

■ **School Site:** Investigate natural habitats, wildlife, trees, grounds maintenance practices and ways to improve a school site;

■ **Environmental Quality:** Explore the facility and make improvements to indoor air quality, transportation, chemical use and more;

■ **Waste and Recycling:** Review

the waste a school generates; where it goes; and identify and improve existing recycling and composting efforts.

The Nebraska Public Power District supports GreenSchools by providing educational resources, teacher professional development and classroom programs. A key component is an investigative toolkit, which NPPD will loan to schools. The kits contain light and watt meters, an infrared temperature gauge,

a CO2 meter, a conservation flow meter bag, and other equipment for investigations.

Students are trained to use diagnostic tools to assess school energy usage, making their school building a learning lab. The program helps improve academic performance in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math), and assists students in developing critical thinking skills.

Teachers will be encouraged to have each student participate in home energy audits. Investigations can also be done in afterschool settings and youth groups. Based on results, schools will develop action plans focused on reducing energy usage at the school, increasing the school's energy efficiency and improving environmental quality.

Where, When

GreenSchools workshops are set at Chadron on Oct. 18 and 19; Kearney on Nov. 14; and next spring in Norfolk and Auburn.

For details, reach Jennifer Swerczek at 402-336-2701 or: jlswerc@nppd.com

Cover Story:

The most recent of a long and difficult series of contract negotiations at Neligh-Oakdale ended up before the Commission of Industrial Relations. Find out why members there stepped back a bit from the CIR ruling.

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More Than the Core



**NSEA President
Nancy Fulton**

“
...more than
14 years after
Columbine, we
have school
buildings with
multiple and
uncontrolled
points of
access. We
have teachers
with no way to
communicate
from their
classrooms.”

A little more than two months from now we will observe the first anniversary of the Sandy Hook Elementary School tragedy that took the lives of 26 innocent children and teachers.

Each of us can close our eyes and recall the horrific and heartbreaking images that flashed through the media coverage. Educators, those of us who spend our days in schools, have particularly strong and emotional feelings about every instance of school violence. Why did it happen? What can be done to stop it from ever happening again?

Perhaps educators and policymakers – especially policymakers – might do well to reflect on the state of our schools during America’s Safe Schools Week, set for Oct. 20-26. But more on that later.

The teaching profession is about so much more than core subjects. It is also about helping to shape the “whole child.” Classroom teaching encompasses academics, social skills, character building, physical and emotional health. Teachers also work to instill a sense of independence and to inspire a lifelong love of learning.

More Subjects, More Often

Teachers invest most of their waking hours to help students achieve dreams. Teachers do everything possible to ensure student safety, to ensure their mental and emotional well-being, and to ensure that they grow up to be happy, healthy, contributing members of society.

Yet our system of education seems to value only what can be “measured.” Year after year, educators are asked to give more assessments, in more subjects, and more often. The focus on this one small aspect of education suggests that knowledge is the primary goal of education. Such an assumption comes at the cost of the rest of the child, ignoring the fact that knowledge is a means to an end, and not an end in and of itself.

Schools must be vigilant in providing physically safe and secure learning environments for all students, making decisions based on student, community and school district needs. School facilities should be equipped with updated structural and technological support to protect stu-

dents and staff from danger. Yes, many school districts reassessed safety policies and procedures following Sandy Hook. Some made physical or supportive changes to their schools. But more than 14 years after Columbine, we have school buildings with multiple and uncontrolled points of access. We have teachers with no way to communicate from their classrooms.

Mental Health Service Compromised

Further, mental illness plays a role in too many instances of violence in our communities and schools (as this is written, news reports tell us of 12 dead at the hand of a mentally ill young man in a Washington, D.C., Navy yard). According to the Committee on School Health, more than 20 percent of American children and adolescents have mental health issues. Meanwhile, state and federal funding cuts have significantly compromised mental health services in school settings. Awareness and diagnosis of mental illness often starts in our schools, yet there is a huge shortage of school counselors and psychologists. Our students deserve access to specialized, trained school personnel to support their behavioral, social and emotional needs.

There must also be a continued focus on the ongoing issue of bullying, which can threaten a student’s physical and emotional safety and diminish their ability to learn. One recent survey showed that 75 percent of students respond in the affirmative when asked whether they have been bullied during their school years.

The week of Oct. 20-26 is America’s Safe School Week. Ironically, Safe School Week has been around since 1984, shortly after the Reagan administration created the National School Safety Center. The observance promotes a productive and safe learning climate in all schools. For details, free resources and more, click on the ‘Free Resources’ and ‘Safe Schools Week’ links at:

www.schoolsafety.us/home

I hope you consider participating in this annual observance. I know you’ll continue to advocate for the safe well-being of your students and the quality of their education.



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:

Chadron State College.....	Page 21	Freeman.....	Page 24	Lexington.....	Page 11, 17	Papillion-LaVista.....	Page 17, 24
Conestoga.....	Page 24	Fremont.....	Page 17, 24	McCool Junction.....	Page 17	Peru State College.....	Page 21
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Evaluations Ahead!

NSEA's 18 UniServ Directors Work to Assist You

Anticipating and then enduring the evaluation process by an administrator can be unnerving to a veteran educator, much less to a teacher in the first few years of his or her career.

While veteran teachers are more likely to be used to the evaluation process, probationary teachers are certainly less familiar with how evaluations work.

For instance, how often should a probationary teacher be evaluated by his or her administrator? That question has been asked, answered and sometimes misunderstood by administrators and teachers alike.

For those teachers early in their career, going into the evaluation conference review can be just as nerve-wracking as the actual evaluation.

Some school districts have policies that exceed the state requirement for the evaluation of probationary teachers, which is permissible. The evaluation of permanent teachers is not outlined in state statute, but is typically found in board policy for each individual school district.

If you have any questions about the evaluation process, about an upcoming evaluation; about the results of your evaluation; or about your post-evaluation conference with your administrator, call NSEA and ask for your UniServ director. You

Evaluation Near? Consider These Tips!

If you're preparing for an evaluation, consider these tips, offered by NSEA Director of Advocacy Trish Guinan:

- Take good notes during evaluation conferences. Writing will help you focus on what is being said and will assist you in later recalling what was covered.

- Ask clarifying questions in a professional manner, but for the most part be prepared to remain in a "listening mode." Do not be argumentative.

- Before signing the evaluation, carefully read any statements that denote what your signature indicates. If you are uncertain whether to sign the evaluation but have been directed to do so, then add a statement such as "My signature only indicates that I have received a copy."

- Before submitting a written response to an evaluation, consult your NSEA UniServ Director for advice.

- There is no statutory time limit for submitting written responses to evaluations. If you are directed to conform to a time limit, request an extension of the deadline if you are unable to comply. As a general rule, it's customary to submit written responses within two to three working weeks.

- Maintain accurate records on the date and length of evaluations, as well as dates of evaluation conferences. Keep copies of all documents, especially signed documents.

may reach NSEA toll-free, at 1-800-742-0047.

'Annie's Mailbox' and Wise Advice

This letter appeared in the "Annie's Mailbox" advice column in July, and shows why membership is a wise investment:

"Dear Annie: I read the letter from 'Can't Believe Adults Act This Way,' whose daughter just began her first teaching job and is having a nightmare year due to staff bullies. I could have written that, although in my case, the main bully was the principal.

"I received nasty emails from her on a daily basis, and she once called me into her office to say she didn't like

me. The young teacher needs to ignore these bullies and try to do her job. If that becomes impossible, she should report it to the teachers union. It's surprising how these administrators and fellow teachers can harass someone and then expect perfect performance. A union rep will handle the issue, and she'll be represented by a trained advocate. — Davenport, Iowa

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of Ann Landers' column. It is distributed by the Creators Syndicate.

According to the Nebraska Department of Education, 271 Nebraska educators shared in the Nebraska Legislature's \$600,000 allocation to the Enhancing Excellence in Teaching Program (EETP) that provides tuition reimbursement to educators seeking advanced degrees. No information was kept on the number of applicants turned away after the grant pool was exhausted, but the last time the program was in operation, in 2009, more than 100 educators were turned away — and the program that year had \$800,000 in funding.

Watch *The Voice* next spring for details on the 2014 application process.

Documentary Says Go Public!

Go Public, a day in the life of one American school district — to be released just in time for American Education Week — is an "antidote" to the war on public schools.

Go Public is a 90-minute documentary of one entire day in the Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD), a racially and economically diverse district in Southern California with 28 public school campuses. The film tells the story of one day from sun up to long after sundown and provides a window into the world of an urban school district, the many dedicated people, the myriad of opportunities available, and the complexity of effectively serving the needs of all students.

On May 8, 2012, 50 small camera crews followed a group of people who participate, attend, support and work in PUSD. The film tells the story as things happen, with no voice-over narrative and no expert or celebrity commentaries. *Go Public* had access to the struggles and resolutions that often occur many times in an average day.

The film is set for release in November, just ahead of American Education Week, Nov. 18-22. The film is a positive, accurate portrayal of hard-working public school staff, parents and administrators. Learn more at:

gopublicproject.org

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***The number of GRADUATE degree programs for educators that are available at Chadron, Peru and Wayne State Colleges. Fifteen are offered entirely ONLINE. Check them out at www.csc.edu or www.peru.edu or www.wsc.edu.**



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Officers, new staff: The officers of the Neligh-Oakdale Education Association posed for a snapshot with the school district's new hires and new NOEA members. Front, from left, are past President Lisa Newton-Hanson; Treasurer Stacey Richart; President Kristina Nolze and Secretary Nicole Schmitz. In back, from left, are: Landon Bloedorn, Ron Beacom, Brittney Petersen, Cassie Baldo and negotiator Mary Pfanstiel.

A 'Comprehensive' Success

Neligh-Oakdale Successfully Navigates CIR, New Resolution Officer Process

Historic Result Brought Sides Together, Validates LB397, NSEA Support

When members of the Neligh-Oakdale Education Association finally entered into a two-year contract this past spring, it ended a lengthy, complex and tension-filled negotiations process.

The contract success also carried broad and deep implications beyond the boundaries of the district, nestled in the Elkhorn River valley in north central Nebraska.

Yes, it was a success for those 39 educators who teach the district's 330 or so K-12 students. The NOEA members came together as one, worked hard, stuck together and won a perhaps unprecedented ruling, in terms of salary, from the Nebraska Commission of Industrial Relations.

That CIR ruling – later scaled back slightly during the resolution officer process in the spirit of compromise – set the NOEA salary schedule squarely at midpoint among area schools. It also validated member concerns that the district's salary schedule had undervalued educators for a decade or more.

But dry ink on the contract also marked a success for NSEA in the area of advocacy, in legal services, member organizing, and government relations. It was a success for the Nebraska Legislature; for other school districts in the region; and even for

the Neligh-Oakdale Board of Education.

"This was a success story in a comprehensive way," said NSEA Attorney Scott Norby.

NSEA Director of Advocacy Trish Guinan was more succinct. "This was historic," she said.

From the NOEA perspective, salary settlements had been underwhelming for years. NOEA negotiators constantly sought to play catch up, to become comparable to area districts.

"For years, NOEA members felt they were forced to settle for less than they deserved. They felt they weren't heard," said NSEA UniServ Director Rich Wergin.

By May 2012, NOEA negotiators were still seeking agreement on a contract for 2012-13. Unable to reach agreement, talks ended, and on May 23, 2012, with NSEA's assistance, the NOEA filed for relief in the CIR.

The timing of the CIR filing was critical. It also added a layer of complexity.

In 2011, the Legislature had revamped collective bargaining statutes with passage of LB397. During the legislative process, as Norby notes, amendments and debate on LB397 at one point swayed dangerously close to complete elimination of public sector bargaining in Nebraska. Late in the session, in a series of ad hoc legislative committee meetings that lasted until midnight and beyond, NSEA was at hand, answering questions and pushing senators

"This was a success story in a comprehensive way."

**— Scott Norby,
NSEA Attorney**

to preserve collective bargaining.

It was very close, but common sense prevailed. With NSEA's influence, senators reached compromise and LB397 eventually passed on a 48-0 vote.

"In the Big Scheme of things, NSEA saved collective bargaining. We came dangerously close to being Wisconsin, but the Legislature had the wisdom to see through that," said Norby.

With an effective date for schools of July 1, 2012, the new statutes set a strict and very compressed bargaining calendar; set a resolution officer process for those locals and districts that have not completed bargaining by Feb. 8 each year; and limited the jurisdiction of the CIR to enter wage orders only where comparability midpoint falls outside a four percent window of 98 percent to 102 percent. That limitation, in the CIR's words, "establishes guidelines for how the Commission should establish wage rates for school districts depending on whether total compensation for bargaining unit members falls below, above or within a range of 98 percent to 102 percent of the array's midpoint."

In other words, in some cases the legislative changes implemented by LB397 would be a determining factor in future CIR rulings.

The NOEA filing occurred five full weeks before the July 1 effective date of LB397, a point that would become crucial.

When the CIR heard the case in October 2012, the school district's attorney argued that LB397 provisions should apply, despite that five week filing cushion. The CIR acted in fast fashion. On Jan. 10, 2013, the CIR ruled that LB397's "plain language" was clear: because the NOEA filed before July 1, the case fell under the pre-LB397 statutory language. That spared the case from LB397's "four percent window" language.

In addition, the CIR set the NOEA base salary for 2012-13 at \$31,412 – midpoint in the array of 14 schools. That was \$1,262 more than the NOEA last request for 2012-13 before talks reached impasse the previous May.

Norby called the ruling "arguably the largest wage order we've ever gotten." Thanks to the expertise of NSEA's Kathy Hutchinson, comparability studies had been prepared for three consecutive years and contained valid and precise data to show NOEA's compensation fell well short of neighboring districts.

Some locals accept comparability studies prepared by the school board or its attorney. Those studies may be unreliable and contain suspect methodology.

"Those locals that don't do the work, over time, will find their salaries at the bottom of the array," Norby said.

While the ruling was a success for the members of the NOEA, Norby noted it did not resolve the underlying tensions between the board and the association. That became clear when, 10 days later, the board appealed the CIR order to the

Nebraska Court of Appeals.

The district's appeal further complicated the issue. Now, in late January 2013, the contract for 2012-13 was under appeal. Meanwhile, the settlement deadline for 2013-14 contracts was Feb. 8 – just two weeks away.

Against that scenario, Norby said it was likely a second CIR filing would be necessary for the 2013-14 contract year. That, however, would not resolve the underlying tensions.

"I was looking at it from the standpoint of 'when does this ever end? We've got to get off this treadmill,'" he said.

As Norby, Guinan and the NOEA negotiators worked through February to resolve the stalemate, Norby hit upon an idea. Why not put both sides in front of a resolution officer – an option provided for by LB397, but never before available in K-12 bargaining statutes.

Norby approached the district's attorney, and both sides soon agreed. A resolution officer proceeding was scheduled for April. Norby said both he and the district's attorney were frank with their clients: If the resolution officer process concludes without settlement, the officer selects what he or she determines to be the last best offer.

"We let our clients know 'this is it.' The resolution officer is mediation with a hammer," he said.

The resolution officer met with both sides, then separated them, and shuttled offers back and forth. Much to their credit, the school district team first suggested settling both the 2012-13 and 2013-14 contracts with one agreement. The NOEA team agreed to step back from the CIR order, to take less money in the first year, and to move those dollars to the second year in order to reach an agreement.

The final contract also addressed several working condition concerns that the CIR, by statute, is unable to address. By early May, both sides had approved and accepted the contract.

"The resolution officer proceeding worked exactly as the Legislature intended it to work," said Norby.

Norby and Guinan gave kudos to the local. Guinan noted that NOEA members attended NSEA's Leadership Institute and were regulars at NSEA's Advocacy Conference and Delegate Assembly in recent years.

"This local was delightful to work with," she said. "They communicated well with members, held monthly meetings, and everyone attended."

The process put real dollars in the pockets of educators while easing tensions between the two sides, said Norby. NOEA is hopeful that both teams have a better understanding of their array, proper methodology and relevant information as a result of this experience.

"Those involved with the Neligh-Oakdale members' success can be justifiably proud. That includes the NSEA staff, the Legislature and NOEA negotiators," said Norby.

"This is a success story."



The opener: At a meeting to open the school year Neligh-Oakdale Education Association Past President Lisa Newton-Hanson, President Kristina Nolze and NSEA UniServ Director Rich Wergin update NOEA members.



The Education Boss: State Sen. Kate Sullivan, chair of the Nebraska Legislature's Education Committee, paid a visit to the NSEA Board of Directors in September. From left are NSEA Executive Director Craig R. Christiansen; Sullivan; NSEA President Nancy Fulton; and NSEA Vice President Leann Widhalm.

Sullivan Delivers Good News

Education Committee Chair: Funding on the Upswing

State Sen. Kate Sullivan delivered two key messages to the NSEA Board of Directors in September.

First, said Sullivan, there will be changes to the state aid formula in coming years. Second, funding for education is on the upward swing.

The Cedar Rapids senator provided an update on the work of the Legislature's Education Committee, which she chairs. Of particular interest was committee work on Legislative Resolution 182, which charges the committee with the task of examining alternatives for financing K-12 public education in Nebraska.

"The good news from the past (legislative) session," she said, "is that we started to increase funding for education. We're on that path.

"We also got a clear message from the (legislative) body that we needed to take a close look at the state aid formula."

The state aid formula will disburse \$906 million to Nebraska

K-12 school districts this year. The formula, however, has drawn criticism for its complexity; for providing dramatic swings in aid; and for extreme shifts in the date for state aid certification. Because of how the formula is weighted, about 45 percent of the state's 250 or so school districts receive no state funding.

The committee agreed to start with a blank slate and thus far has been listening and learning, she said.

The committee's review of the state aid formula must also be balanced, she said, against the work of the Legislature's Tax Modernization Committee, which is reviewing and considering changes to all facets of the state's tax collection system. The Legislature will likely take action on recommendations from both committees in 2014. Changes in the state aid formula would likely not take effect until 2015.

Sullivan also serves on the Tax Modernization Committee of the Legislature, which is reviewing changes to the state's tax structure, exemptions and rates.

Especially in rural areas hit by rising farmland valuations, Sullivan said Nebras-

Education Hearing Dates, Sites

The Legislature's Education Committee will host public hearings in October to take ideas for restructuring the state aid to schools formula. Sen. Kate Sullivan of Cedar Rapids urged NSEA members to make their thoughts known at the hearings. Dates and sites:

- **Hastings**
Wednesday, Oct. 2, 10 a.m.
Sr. High Auditorium
- **McCook**
Wednesday, Oct. 2, 7 p.m.
Jr. H.S. Board Room
- **Dunning**
Thursday, Oct. 3, 1:30 p.m.
Sandhills High School
- **Crete**
Monday, Oct. 7, 4 p.m.
Crete H.S. Auditorium
- **Omaha**
Monday, Oct. 7, 10 a.m.
Omaha Public Schools Administration Building
3215 Cuming St.
- **Macy**
Tuesday, Oct. 8, 1:30 p.m.
High School Band Room

Sullivan: Well-Qualified

Sen. Kate Sullivan has top credentials as chair of the Legislature's Education Committee. She attended a one-room school and then a parochial school before graduating at Ord. She earned a degree in family and consumer sciences from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln and worked for the UNL Extension Service. She served on the Cedar Rapids Board of Education, and today has a daughter teaching in a suburban Omaha school, which gives her a better understanding of what teachers do each day.

"I honestly do value what you do," said Sullivan. "The irony of what we expect from you, is that, oddly enough, we don't value you enough; we don't back that up enough with resources. But we're working on that."



Sullivan

kans have been vocal with concerns about property taxes. There may be a need to find other revenue sources for schools, but she offered cautionary notes.

First, she reminded, that “whatever takes place in the arena of property taxes affects other taxes.” Second, the goal is tax equity and fairness, not tax cuts.

“We are not on a mission to lower taxes. I think Nebraska, comparatively speaking, is in pretty good shape. But the (tax revenue) pie is not going to get bigger,” she said.

Certification Hardship

Sullivan encouraged conversation, and board members took advantage to lay out the needs of Nebraska educators.

South Sioux City’s Tracia Blom said that frequent changes to the state aid certification date is a hardship on the negotiations process. The date has been as early as February and as late as June.

“There is a common concern that we do a better job with that timeline,” said Sullivan.

Nebraska’s shunning of Common Core in favor of a unique set of standards could be costly. Omaha teacher Maddie Fennell said much curriculum on the market today is rooted in Common Core, and it will burden Nebraska educators, time and expense-wise, to adapt those materials to state standards.

NSEA Vice President Leann Widhalm said Norfolk schools hired 42 new teachers this year, most right out of college, most with tremendous loan debt.

“Can more money be allocated to the tuition reimbursement program?” said Widhalm.

Sullivan accepted growing concern about college debt, and said the Legislature will look at earmarking state lottery funds for the reimbursement program.

Bayard board member Carolyn Campbell said that new teachers need mentors during their first years of teaching, but that most schools cannot afford that expense. Sullivan agreed on the value of mentoring, and said that subject should be examined by the Legislature.

Sullivan also took several questions regarding an education trust fund. Board members Alan Bone, Westside, and NSEA-Retired President Roger Rea, Omaha, asked about setting aside cash to help smooth state aid fluctuations, or to provide adequate funding for education.

Sullivan said a trust fund has been discussed, but the problem is finding the dollars. Ultimately, it boils down to 25 votes in the Legislature, she said.

Negotiators: The Time is Now

Advocacy Conference is Just Days Away

Note to local association negotiators: Do you know how the Affordable Care Act (ACA) will affect your contract in 2014-15?

That will be an emphasis at NSEA’s annual Advocacy Conference at Grand Island’s Holiday Inn on Friday evening, Oct. 18, and Saturday, Oct. 19. The ACA will also be on the agenda at November’s Panhandle District Advocacy Conference in Scottsbluff. Negotiators from all NSEA local affiliates are urged to attend at one of the sites.

Also on the agenda: details regarding resolution officer proceedings, now an option for K-12 bargaining under LB397; Bargaining 101; how to analyze a district’s Annual Financial Report; state aid formula issues; and how to use comp study information at the bargaining table.

The Oct. 19 date does not conflict with Nebraska football this year, al-

**TIME IS RUNNING OUT!
REGISTER
NOW**



lowing more time Saturday to focus on bargaining issues, said NSEA Director of Advocacy Trish Guinan.

“For a lot of reasons, this is a very important conference for negotiators to attend,” said Guinan.

To register for either site, call NSEA at 1-800-742-0047, or go to:

www.nsea.org

For details, call your NSEA UniServ director at the phone number above.

Panhandle Dates Set

The Panhandle District Advocacy Conference will be Friday evening, Nov. 8, and Saturday, Nov. 9, at Scottsbluff’s Hampton Inn Convention Center.

On the agenda are details on how the Affordable Care Act will affect coming contracts, as well as an Introduction to the NSEA for Education Support Professionals, scheduled for both Friday evening and Saturday morning.

BINGO!

Educators: This new two-in-one Bingo! card game teaches second- through fifth-graders in a fun way about the many useful items made from pig and soybean by-products – wasting virtually nothing. The “Pork” game is on one side of the card, the “Soy” game on the other. The **Bingo!** kit includes game tokens, worksheets, call-out cards, and a classroom poster.

Quantities are limited so order yours today! Go to <http://brokawmarketing.com/bingo/>

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Locals Take Action

Four local associations have thus far taken part in the 'Strong Schools, Strong Communities, Strong Economy' campaign:

Grand Island

Collected shopping receipts from members and drew from those receipts for prizes.

Lincoln

Posted billboards featuring local business owners around the community, featuring the 'Strong Schools, Strong Community, Strong Economy' message; gave t-shirts with the same message to members.

Lexington

Collected three weeks of receipts from Lexington Education Association members last year, and drew for prizes. The receipts indicated LEA members had purchased more than \$163,000 in goods from local merchants in 21 days!

Norfolk

Kicked off a 'Local First' campaign with a luncheon attended by more than 70 merchants, city leaders and officials. This year, with the Norfolk Chamber, co-sponsored a Back to School picnic for educators, and saluted the Chamber for being honored as the best chamber for a community with less than 100,000 residents.

The Importance of Local First!

Local Associations Work to Emphasize Link Between Strong Schools, Strong Communities

Leave it to teachers to devise a catchphrase to reflect the goal of NSEA's "Strong Schools, Strong Communities, Strong Economy" goal: Local First.

It's that simple. When boiled down to its essence, the campaign promotes school, community and economic health through a simple principle: Each of those three factors relies on the other two. Making purchases locally strengthens the local economy, which in turn strengthens the community's ability to invest in strong schools. The school district strengthens the community with college- or job-ready graduates and citizens AND with employees who spend their hard-earned dollars locally.

No matter which of the three points in this simple economic cycle you start with – school, community or economy – the next is reliant on the last in order to remain vital and vibrant.

Excel on Main Street

Three actions teachers can take to support Main Street businesses and the local economy:

- Buy local, whenever possible.
- Support the activities of your local Chamber of Commerce.
- Share this story with a local business owner/manager. Ask that the poster on the following pages be displayed in a prominent location in that business.

Schools a Vital Constant

The goal of the NSEA campaign is to educate association members and the public about 'local first' and the fact that healthy, quality public schools are a vital constant in the economic equation that drives the health of local, regional and national economies.

"Policymakers spend a great deal of time, attention and money to attract and entice business," said NSEA President Nancy Fulton. "What they often overlook is that education is an existing, statewide industry that is very effective at not only attracting business but also cycling money through the state's economy where it will do the most good: on Main Street."

Money spent on Main Street, particularly with locally-owned, independent business owners, aids local employees and enhances local tax revenues – which in turn benefits the local school district.

The 'local first' campaign attempts to stimulate the local marketplace and community.

"Indirectly," said Fulton, "a benefit is an increase in the tax revenues necessary to invest in projects for the public good, such as infrastructure, services and public schools."

Certainly, public schools are much more than cookie-cutter industrial assembly lines pouring out widgets. But when counting employees from pre-kindergarten through college and university level, from bus drivers to college professors, education employs nearly 50,000 Nebraskans. They spend money on Main Street. Their salaries buy local goods and services. They pay property taxes, and income taxes. All of that cash exchanging hands boosts the local economy and local tax revenues.

Multiplier Effect

That boost is called the economic multiplier effect. It is an essential piece of any local first campaign.

A 2012 study funded by the American Booksellers Association evaluated the economic impact of retailers in 10 cities from Louisville, KY, to Ogden, UT, and found that spending at independent retailers generated 3.7 times more direct local economic benefit than did spending at chain retailers.

The Institute for Self-Reliance studied the economic multiplier effect in a set of Maine communities in 2003. The study found that each \$100 spent at a local, independent, retailer, generated \$45 in secondary local spending. Every \$100 spent at a big box chain generated just \$14 in secondary local spending.

"This campaign is simply a way to understand the interdependent relationship between quality public schools, strong community development efforts, and a vibrant economic marketplace," said Fulton. "The more vibrant the market, as measured by consumer purchases and personal wealth, the stronger the community, the stronger its amenities – such as parks and roads – and the public school associated with a stable flow of tax revenues."

So spread the word, hang the poster found on the next two pages, and buy local!



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You Have the 'UniServ Edge'



NSEA UniServ Staff Easy to Reach, at Your Service

If you have an issue with an administrator, a question about your district's evaluation process or wonder whether you're on the correct step on your district's salary schedule, remember, you have the UniServ Edge!

The NSEA UniServ program is the heart of the service provided to members, and with 18 UniServ directors scattered across the state, assistance is always close at hand. Most are former educators, with classroom experience, negotiations experience, leadership experience or more. They can answer your question, or know where to find the answer in short order.

For instance, in recent weeks, NSEA UniServ directors have dealt with the questions, submitted by members through the NSEA website:

"I received a subpoena to appear in court on a custody battle regarding one of my former students. The subpoena says I am 'to bring all notes, correspondence, records, and documentation pertaining to (student's name) to testify as a witness in this case on behalf of (father).' Please advise, as this is my first subpoena."

"I put in 27 years teaching and I did not meet the Rule of 85. I resigned to care for an aging parent who now must go to a nursing home, and I have accepted a job as a para. Will that count toward the Rule of 85?"

"I would like to speak to my UniServ rep about an issue of a school board member accusing me of cheating on state tests after I shared at a board meeting details about using the Nebraska Department of Education's 'Check 4 Learning' program."

These are just a sample of the broad and diverse kinds of questions posed to NSEA UniServ directors each and every day. UniServ directors are stationed across the state, from Omaha to

Scottsbluff, and stand ready to answer your questions. In the case immediate, urgent assistance is needed, contact the NSEA Headquarters at 1-800-742-0047, where a UniServ director is always on duty. In Omaha, call 402-731-0800. In Lincoln, call 402-489-

7500.

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

www.nsea.org

<http://www.education.ne.gov/cspd/Mentoring.html>



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Workshop will provide hands-on activities to help teachers implement the GreenSchools program with students. **Guest speakers include professionals from the Nebraska Forest Service, Keep Nebraska Beautiful, Natural Resources Districts, and Nebraska Public Power District.**

Registration deadline is one week prior to workshop.

Workshop Locations:

**Chadron State College
Oct. 18-19**

Registration will include lodging (if needed), breakfast and lunch on Friday and breakfast on Saturday.

or

**ESU 10 Office, Kearney
Nov. 14**

Lunch included with registration.

To register, contact Jennifer Swerczek, NPPD Energy Education Specialist, at jlswerc@nppd.com, or visit nppd.com/greenschools.

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A-ha!

Leadership Grads Enjoy 'A-ha!' Moments at NSEA Institute

The 29 members of the NSEA Leadership Institute Class of 2013 were asked about their 'a-ha!' moment during the three-day conference.



One noted that, during a tour of the State Capitol, she found senators and legislative staff accessible, open and friendly. "It's so easy to talk to them and tell them 'here are my realities' in the classroom, instead of sitting around and griping about what politicians are doing to schools and students," she said.

Another was surprised with NSEA's balanced candidate recommendation process: bi-partisan panels of local association members interview candidates on education issues, and then decide which to recommend.

Some attendees were veteran educators starting on a path to leadership. Others were in the early stages of their career: Grand Island's Jill Kimbrough recently signed her first contract. Each left with a Certificate of Recognition and an appreciation for NSEA services.

Lincoln Education Association's Todd Tystad posted this comment on Facebook: "This was by far one of the best professional experiences that I've ever had. It was an honor to participate with so many talented and brilliant educators. Many thanks to the NSEA!"

The Institute develops a thorough knowledge of NSEA, and provides training on member rights, organizing, membership and other aspects of the Association. Open to any K-12, Higher Education or Education Support Professional who is a local leader or is interested in local leadership, the Institute is also an opportunity to network with local leaders from around the state.

The event was a success, if judged by one evaluation: "I'm sure I speak on behalf of every participant when I say this has been one of the most worthwhile professional events I have ever participated in."



Sign here: Registering their presence at the State Capitol guest book during a scavenger hunt in the historic building are, from left, Carly Arterburn, McCool Junction; Stephanie Hansen, Hayes Center; Lindsay Wilson and Amy Himes, both of Papillion-LaVista.

Graduates!
Hyannis member Bryan Regier and Fremont member Gwen Smith smile as they receive their Leadership Institute certificate of completion from NSEA President Nancy Fulton.



The Class of 2014! These members of the NSEA Leadership Institute Class of 2014 are primed and ready to lead members into the future.

2014 NSEA Leadership Institute Graduates

Fremont:	Gwen Smith	William West
	Becky Turner	
Grand Island:	Rene Hinman	McCool Junction:
	Amber Jones	Carly Arterburn
	Jill Kimbrough	Millard:
Hayes Center:	Stephanie Hansen	Bonnie Patten
Hyannis:	Bryan Regier	Neligh-Oakdale:
Lexington:	Tracy Naylor	Frank Gade
	Neil Risinger	Ethan Larsen
	Sophie Risinger	North Platte:
	Suzanne Wendorff	Claudette Wielechowski
Lincoln:	Ann Allyn	Mary Wright
	Jessica Hughes	Omaha:
	Paula Limbach	Caitlin Judge
	Todd Tystad	Cathy Nelson
		Kimberly Talamantes
		Papillion-LaVista:
		Amy Himes
		Lindsay Wilson
		Stuart:
		Brenda Larabee
		Western Nebraska
		Community College:
		Merrillene Wood

EHA Dependent Verification a Success

Process Strengthens Blue Cross Plan, Saving Plan and Members Cash

When the Educator's Health Alliance dependent eligibility verification project launched last December, some members asked why the project was important and whether it would be worth the inconvenience.

The answer is a resounding yes.

The verification of dependent eligibility helps ensure that only eligible individuals are covered under the plan, and helps keep plan costs as low as possible.

Participants in EHA's Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska health care plan voluntarily de-enrolled 277 individuals as they came to better understand the eligibility rules. An additional 778 were either ruled ineligible through the verification process or did not respond to the verification effort. The cumulative de-enrollments will save eligible EHA participants more than \$1.6 million annually – a figure that will have a positive impact on future rates.

"I am particularly pleased with the response from NSEA members," said Nancy Fulton, NSEA president. "As always, our members have shown a high degree of responsibility, engagement and ownership by taking the time to help the EHA Board of Directors meet its fiduciary responsibility and ensure



the long-term strength and viability of our health care plans."

As part of its commitment to manage responsibly, the EHA hired Xerox HR Solutions to ensure that the EHA was providing the Blue Cross and Blue Shield health care plan for only those who are eligible.

To ensure only eligible family members are enrolled from now on, EHA will have an ongoing program to verify the eligibility of new members. This process will also be conducted by Xerox.

Attention: New Hires

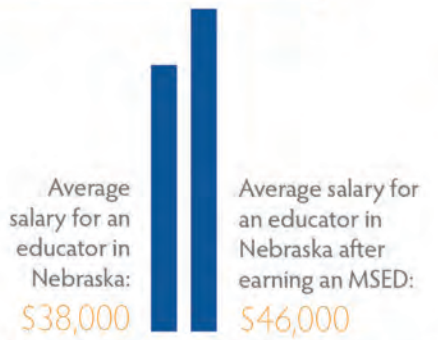
The Educators Health Alliance (EHA) has retained Xerox HR Solutions to conduct an eligibility verification process for all new dependents and newly hired employees with dependents.

Verification helps to ensure that only eligible individuals are covered by the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska health care plan managed by the Educators Health Alliance. The NSEA, the Nebraska Council of School Administrators and the Nebraska Association of School Boards manage the EHA plan.

Plan members should know that when requested, they must participate in the verification. If a participant does not provide the proper information within the required timeline, they risk losing coverage for their dependents.

If you have questions, contact EHA Field Representative Greg Long at 866-465-1342, or Kent Trelford-Thompson at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Nebraska at 402-982-6810.

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Save With Dave!

NEA Click & Save is the most popular discount program for NEA members and their families. The service offers savings on brand name merchandise from hundreds of top retailers, online stores and merchants.

Save on clothing, electronics, restaurants, jewelry, movie tickets, cell phones, cruises and much more. Saving has never been easier and new offers are added almost daily. It is so easy to save that members can even set e-mail reminders for favorite merchants to be notified in advance of upcoming sales and discounts.

Here is a sampling of the NEA Click & Save program highlights.

With the **Whirlpool Corporation VIPLINK Program**, NEA members can save like a VIP on appliances from Whirlpool. Members can save substantially on hundreds of popular consider products from brand names like KitchenAid, Maytag, Amana, Whirlpool, GarageWorks and more. The program offers convenient shopping, a secure website, and members can buy up to 12 products per year for family members!

The **NEA Auto Purchase Advantage Plan** offers guaranteed low, upfront prices on autos without the haggling. It's quick and hassle free, and members save an average of \$2,678 off the manufacturer's suggested retail price. Participating dealers are carefully selected to be a part of a nationwide network, and NEA members can determine the features they want in a car before purchase!

The **NEA Magazine Service** offers an exclusive triple guarantee: savings, quality and service, with no obligation to buy anything at any time. The program offers a year-round gift subscription service for that hard-to-buy-for relative. No credit cards needed to order on-line, seven payment options and a money back guarantee if you're unhappy. More than 1,000 titles at up to 85 percent off newsstand prices.

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David Glenn is Nebraska's NEA Member Benefits representative.



Glenn

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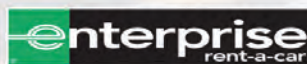
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AL301013

Chadron State's Roweton Appointed to CAEP

To Review Teacher Education Programs

Chadron State College Professor Bill Roweton is a new appointee to the Board of Examiners for the Council for the Accreditation of Education Preparation (CAEP).

Roweton, a professor in the Department of Counseling, Psychology and Social Work, will serve a three-year term with CAEP. He will be assigned to his first review team this fall, and will make a campus visit next spring.

"My responsibility as a team member is to contribute to an extensive offsite review report of the teacher education program's self-study," said Roweton, "and to visit the campus and contribute to an onsite document. On the campus visit, the team focuses on what is not clear, especially items tagged for clarification in the off-site report."

In July, Roweton received extensive training, along with 30 other new members of the Board of Examiners.

That training, he said, focused on three of the five new CAEP standards. All five CAEP standards will go into effect in January, and the next three years will mark a transition from National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards to the newer CAEP standards, he said.



Roweton

"CAEP standards are mandatory starting in 2016 for professional educator preparation programs. Whether a CAEP team faces the NCATE or the CAEP standards depends on the timing of our visit and choices that the institution makes for the next several years," he said.

Founded in 1954, NCATE is an independent accrediting organization and one of the teaching profession's mechanisms to help establish a high quality teacher profession. NCATE's performance-based system of accreditation fosters competent classroom teachers and other educators who work to improve the education of all P-12 students. NCATE believes every student deserves a caring, competent, and highly qualified teacher.

The National Education Association was one of five national organizations instrumental in the founding of NCATE.

CAEP, beginning operation with more than 900 educator providers, was formed organizationally from two existing teacher education accrediting agencies, NCATE and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC). According to the CAEP website, "CAEP advances excellence in educator preparation through evidence-based accreditation that assures quality and supports continuous improvements to strengthen P-12 student learning."



Executive Discussion

The Executive Board of the State College Education Association

met in Valentine in mid-September to discuss bargaining strategy and other issues in advance of negotiations for the 2014-15 Association year.

Above, NSEA Director of Research Larry Scherer stands in with the Executive Board, from left, Spencer Davis, Peru State College; SCEA Vice President Joshua Caulkin, Wayne State College; SCEA President Frank Adams, Wayne State College; Bob Sweetland, Wayne State College; Elise Hepworth, Wayne State College; SCEA Treasurer James Koehn, Chadron State College; Brad Wilburn, Chadron State College; and Bob Knight, Chadron State College.



Above, SCEA President Dr. Frank Adams presents a gift to Dr. Bob Sweetland, Wayne State College, for his work as the lead negotiator for the SCEA.

Strong Schools, Communities, Economy

Strong Economic Cycle Continues — If We Act!

The NSEA-Retired sponsored the *NEA Strong Schools, Strong Communities, Strong Economy* training seminar at the Omaha Education Association headquarters in August.

Strong schools prepare students as valuable middle-class wage earners and leaders, who contribute to a growing economy and higher incomes that boost consumer spending, increased business production, and more tax revenue, which can raise state aid to education.

That economic cycle will continue in Nebraska only if we work to educate others about the wisdom of investing in education. That includes educating the wage earners who demand lower taxes; business owners who seek special tax incentives to locate in our communities; policymakers who promise lower taxes in exchange for votes; policymakers who balance budgets by cutting spending on education and services (see page 11 for more details).

It won't be easy, but the effort is worthwhile, and retirees can be key players. We must continue to encourage investment in education by writing letters to the editor touting investment in education; by sending that message to policymakers; by spreading the word to friends and neighbors; by speaking at local organizations.

Samples for letters and speeches can be found in the Eight Lessons of TEF (Taxation, Economic Development, and Funding) at:

www.nea.org/home/47827.htm

Educator Health Alliance, Medicare Seminars Set

The NSEA-Retired and Educators Health Alliance has set a series of seminars on Medicare and pre-age 65 health care coverage. Seminars will be held at these dates and locations:

- Tuesday, Oct. 29, North Platte Holiday Inn Express.
- Wednesday, Oct. 30, Kearney Holiday Inn.



Human Graph: Above, National Education Association Researcher Dwight Holmes, right, explains income discrepancies at the NSEA-Retired Strong Schools conference in Omaha using a 'human' graph. At right, NSEA-Retired's Joe Higgins, Dave Richardson and NSEA President Nancy Fulton participate in the seminar.



■ Thursday, Oct. 31, Omaha Westside Community Center.

■ Saturday, Nov. 9, Scottsbluff Hampton Inn.

■ Tuesday, Nov. 12th, Norfolk NECC Lifelong Learning Center.

Medicare sessions will be held from 9:30-11:30 a.m., with the EHA sessions set from 1:30-3:30 p.m.

Local Retired Association News for 2013-14

Below is the first of a list of some of the NSEA-Retired locals, their officers and other details.

Central Panhandle Chapter of NSEA-Retired

Officers: President Jeanie Williams, Vice President Karen Harvey, Secretary-Treasurer Janet Gardner, Program Chairs Twila Griffiths and Karen Harvey.

Dues for the 25 members are \$3.

The group meets the third Monday of the month at 11 a.m. at Godfather's Pizza in Scottsbluff.

The group met in August at the Dorothy Krantz home for an update from Sen. John Harms, and in September with Tina Dueker hosting for a meeting with Western Nebraska Community College alumni.

Upcoming: Oct. 21, the local Red Cross, by Chris and Carissa Smith; Nov. 18, Medicare proposals, by Jean Armstrong; Jan. 20, Book Talks, by Shirley Flack; Feb. 17, Lobby Day Reports, by Jim McDermott; March 17, the Regional West Medical Center, by David Griffiths; April 21, Mike Sarchet on development updates on the Scottsbluff/Gering area; May 19, the Legacy of the Plains Museum, with curator Katie Bradshaw.

Issues of concern: new members!

—Rena Kelly, Editor
renaerkelly@gmail.com

Wine, the Canteen Story and Holiday Treats at the Fall Conference

The agenda for the 2013 NSEA-Retired Fall Conference is shaping up to be another fabulous affair!

The conference will once again feature an evening pre-conference 'Wine with Friends' event on Tuesday evening, Oct. 22, followed by a full schedule on Wednesday, Oct. 23.

The Wednesday schedule will feature an update on the work of the Legislature's Tax Modernization Committee — and then the fun begins! The Spotlight on Nebraska speaker, Rosalie Lippincott, will talk about the history

of the World War II-era North Platte Canteen. Break-out sessions will feature preserving old photos, counting carbs, holiday treats, antique review with the ever-popular Tom Bassett, yoga and Tai Chi for seniors, and more.

The conference will be held once again at the Institute of Culinary Arts on the Metropolitan Community College Campus in Omaha.

To make reservations, contact NSEA's Rebecca Smith at 1-800-742-0047.

UNL Takes Lead in Early Childhood Ed

At a time when early childhood education is trending upward, the University of Nebraska has stepped out in front of the pack.

Dr. Samuel J. Meisels, a former pre-school, kindergarten and first grade teacher, has been hired as the founding executive director of the University of Nebraska's Buffett Early Childhood Institute.

Meisels taught pre-school while a graduate student, and then taught the early primary grades before embarking on a long and distinguished career as one of the nation's leading authorities on the assessment of young children and early childhood development. Most recently, he was president of the Erikson Institute in Chicago, the country's premier graduate school in child development.

NU President James B. Milliken said the Buffett Early Childhood Institute will become a national leader in early childhood education and development – to help create a more level playing field for at-risk children and families everywhere.

A gift from Omaha philanthropist Susan A. Buffett, chair

Quotable

An Aug. 2, 2013, Omaha World-Herald editorial said this of the state's investment in early childhood education:

'It makes great sense for Nebraska to direct this attention to early childhood needs. It's a practical issue with crucial long-term consequences for individuals and for society. And it's an issue all Nebraskans can rally around.'

of the Buffett Early Childhood Fund, created the Buffett Early Childhood Institute in 2011. The institute is a university-wide, research, education and policy center focused on promoting the development and success of children from birth to age 8, especially those who are vulnerable because of poverty, abuse, or developmental, learning or behavioral challenges.

Buffett called Meisels a "world-class leader" for the institute.

The University of Nebraska Foundation has made early childhood development and education a priority in its Campaign for Nebraska, an effort by the University of Nebraska Foundation to raise \$1.2 billion, and the Nebraska Legislature has expanded a program that offers grants for early childhood programming. Meisels said Nebraska is the first major university to address the issue.

Meisels has served as Erikson Institute president since 2002. Erikson, an independent higher education institution, prepares child development and family service professionals for leadership. He also taught for 21 years at the University of Michigan.

Kansas Gun Law has Insurance Issues

A law that would allow teachers to carry guns in schools may cause issues for nearly every Kansas school district.

The EMC Insurance Co., which insures nearly 90 percent of Kansas districts, has refused to renew coverage for districts that allow educators and staff to carry concealed firearms on campus. The company said the decision was not political, but financial, based on a riskier school climate that would be created.

"We've been writing school business for almost 40 years, and one of the underwriting guidelines we follow for schools is that any on-site armed security should be provided by uniformed, qualified law enforcement officers," EMC Vice President Mick Lovell told USA Today. "Our guidelines have not recently changed."


Bob Skow, chief executive officer of the Independent Insurance Agents of Iowa said, "It's one thing to have a trained peace officer with a gun in school; it's a completely different situation when you have a custodian or a teacher with a gun. That changes the risk of insuring a school and magnifies it considerably."

Food for Thought



Educators: Food for Thought is an entertaining animated video teaching fourth-graders about how Nebraska hog farms do business. Along the way, students learn about economics, marketing, science and conservation, helping you meet certain NDE standards. The **Food for Thought** package includes a complete lesson plan and a real-life video shot at a Nebraska pig farm.

Provided **FREE** to Nebraska educators by the Nebraska Pork Producers Association and the Nebraska Soybean Board.




Quantities are limited.
Order online NOW at
[http:// brokawmarketing.com/food-for-thought](http://brokawmarketing.com/food-for-thought)

What's Your Classroom Essential?

Educators Aired Their Favorites on NSEA Facebook Site

When asked on the NSEA Facebook page 'What is the one essential item on your desk that you cannot do without?' – NSEA members and fans alike shared plenty of answers!



Trending on Facebook

A daily planner or calendar was generally favored, and Sarah Janzen was even more specific: "My NSEA calendar!" was her answer.

Other responses on the NSEA Facebook page included:

■ "My 'whisper bell' – just an average bell that magically summons whisper voices with just one 'ding,'" said Omaha teacher Angie Bull Rosenthal.

■ Laurel-Concord member Becky Miller said "I could not live without my surge bar under my desk! It powers everything I need to keep me organized and my day flowing!"

■ Joyce Heller Raatz, Fairbury, and retired Conestoga teacher Laura Kallemeyn Parson both said paper clips were indispensable, while Freeman Public Schools teacher Aimee Parde said "colorful pens and post-its" are necessary.

■ York teacher Brenda Spencer-Nelson's pragmatic choice: "My endless cup of coffee!"

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

Speaking of Teaching

"Real heroes don't wear capes. They work in America's schools."

— *Nelba Marquez-Greene, mother of Ana Grace Marquez-Greene, 6, one of 26 victims of the Dec. 14, 2012, Sandy Hook Elementary School shootings.*

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

Family of Teachers



Teaching quartet: Longtime Fremont teacher Durnae Schuetz supplied this photo of her 'Family of Teachers.'

From left, Durnae's sister, Charmaine Kaiser, who taught grades 7-12 for the Youth Center at Topeka, KS, and at USD No. 345 in Topeka; daughter Brier, a high school science teacher at Papillion-LaVista South High School; Schuetz, who taught 31 years in Nebraska, including the last 23 at Fremont; and husband Tony, a fifth grade teacher for the Papillion-LaVista Public Schools.

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.

Bagels and Fruit

From Barbara Walton-Faria, a science teacher at Thompson Middle School in Newport, RI:



We begin the year with "Bagels in the Basement." Bagels and coffee are set up each morning in the teachers' lounge, which is in the basement, giving everyone a chance to meet the new faculty members. Our veteran teachers are encouraged to participate in a "Pineapple Welcome." They hang a pineapple sign on their door, which indicates they welcome new teachers to come in and observe their class in session. This enables the new teachers to see some excellent teaching and pick up pointers.

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