

# Reports to the Assembly

## **Government Relations Committee Report**

*Submitted by Ben Welsch and Julie Adams*

Last year's Delegate Assembly took place prior to the end of the 2023 Legislative Session, so we are now able to report many legislative successes in funding scholarships, grants and loan forgiveness for educators that occurred at the end of that legislative session! LB753 was also a major focus. LB753, which diverts public dollars to private schools through a voucher tax scheme, was passed by the legislature on May 24, 2023. Our plan began immediately to get to work in gathering signatures for the statewide referendum to Repeal LB753. The Support our Schools Nebraska effort to gather 90,000 signatures in 90 days was an overwhelming success. A grand total of 117,415 signatures were submitted and ultimately approved by the Nebraska Secretary of State. NSEA members and other public school supporters from across the state worked together to collect enough signatures to place the referendum on LB753 on the November 5, 2024, General Election ballot for voters to decide.

In December, the committee held a meeting via Zoom to approve the 2024 NSEA questionnaires for State Legislative, State School Board, and Board of Regents candidates. Local interview committees have now been formed to interview primary candidates all across the state for our NSEA recommendation process. We will continue this process through the fall general election. Please consider helping with a local race in your area throughout this year's election cycle. There were also a number of legislative bills that the NSEA has testified on during the 2024 Legislative Session. Property taxes and school funding will continue to dominate the state revenue and expense discussion. Unfortunately, vouchers remain a significant topic of concern! We encourage all members to sign up to receive the NSEA Capitol Update, through which the NSEA Legislative Team provides updates on bills and alerts members when it's important to contact their senator on an issue. Members can also download the new NSEA Capitol Update App, available for your Apple or Android devices.