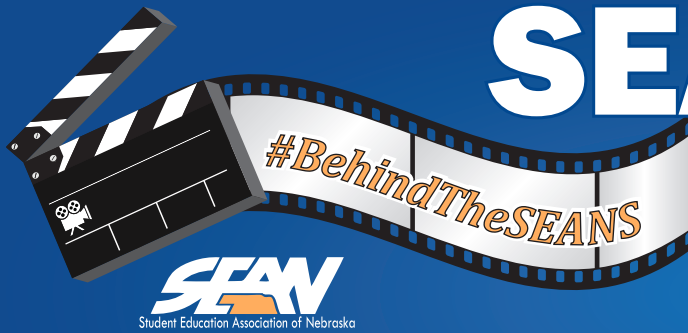


SEAN SCENE

A newsletter by and for members of the
Student Education Association of Nebraska

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FEBRUARY 2017



**DON'T
FORGET
THESE
DATES:**



**NSEA'S 2017
DELEGATE ASSEMBLY,
SPRING CONFERENCE**

**LINCOLN,
Cornhusker Marriott**

April 21-22, 2017

Details on Page 2

**NEA LEADERSHIP
CONFERENCE**

BOSTON, MA

June 27-June 30, 2017

**NEA REPRESENTATIVE
ASSEMBLY**

BOSTON, MA

July 1-5, 2017

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Spring Conference Ahead!

Social Justice, Loan Debt, New Teacher Panel on Tap

As you advance toward earning a teaching degree and a professional teaching certificate, there is much to learn.

The Student Education Association of Nebraska will offer plenty of professional development opportunities at the Spring Conference in Lincoln.

Plans are being finalized to have an NEA staff member from Washington, D.C., provide the keynote address focusing on social justice.

"The 2017 conference is going to be a great opportunity for SEAN members to soak up information about their careers," said SEAN President Denton Beacom, a senior at Wayne State College. "I hope every member gives serious consideration to attending."

Saturday breakout sessions will include a panel discussion with early-in-their-career working K-12 teachers. Expect them to talk and answer questions about interviews; first-year expectations; getting by on a teacher's salary; reducing student loan debt; and more.

Other sessions will offer the perspective of a panel of Nebraska state senators, and will explain

the Professional Practices Commission (PPC).

The PPC is a board of career teachers and administrators appointed by the governor. They investigate allegations of teacher misconduct, review the findings and make recommendations to the State Board of Education for action. Depending on the seriousness of the infraction, the State Board could do nothing, could suspend a teacher's certificate for a period of time, or could permanently revoke a teacher's certificate.

Friday night, March 31, will feature SEAN's annual Delegate Assembly, with election of officers and other business action (see page 2).

All sessions will be held at Nebraska Wesleyan University. Delegate Assembly convenes at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 31, and the Spring Conference will open at 9 a.m. on Saturday, April 1. To register, go here:

www.nsea.org/sean-da

For details, ask your campus advisor, call NSEA's Tamra Mick at 800-742-0047, or:

tamra.mick@nsea.org

Watch the SEAN Facebook page for updates.



All About Contracts: Spring Conference 2016 featured Hastings Education Association member Ben Welsch, left, talking about teaching contracts. Discussing the subject with Welsch after the session were, from left, Caitlin Cassell and Amanda Volksen, Peru State College; and Taylor Ruzicka, Doane College.



On the Board: Nebraska Wesleyan University's Mikayla Nelson, right, explains the duties of a SEAN Regional Representative to members from the Southeast Region during Spring Conference 2016. Nelson was later chosen to serve a second term as Southeast Region Representative.

Delegate Assembly: A Chance to Lead, Learn

SEAN Leaders, Network, Travel, Gain Confidence as an Officer

Members of the Student Education Association of Nebraska have met annually for more than 60 years to elect officers and soak up top-notch professional development.

This year will have added interest for student members seeking to serve. In addition to electing officers and regional representatives, up to six SEAN attendees will be elected as delegates to NSEA's 150th Anniversary Delegate Assembly three weeks later.

The SEAN Delegate Assembly will happen on Friday evening, March 31, and Saturday, April 1, at Nebraska Wesleyan.

Among the professional development opportunities on Saturday will be breakout sessions on loan forgiveness, social justice, the Professional Practices Commission and much more.

The Friday events, however, will focus on election of a presi-

dent-elect, secretary, and underclass representative (see story below), as well as the appointment of representatives from SEAN's four regions (see page 3).

SEAN members who enjoy service work, who seek leadership opportunities and who are willing to offer time to the Association at the state level are urged to consider seeking appointment to one of four regional representative positions (see related story below).

Also selected at SEAN Delegate Assembly will be up to six members to attend the NSEA Delegate Assembly on Friday and Saturday, April 21-22, at Lincoln's Cornhusker Marriot. SEAN delegates will attend with up to 300 active Nebraska teachers. That event is a great networking opportunity for SEAN members. NSEA's sesquicentennial event will open with a gala celebration of the Association's 150 years on Friday night, April 21. The business portion of Delegate Assembly will take place the following day.

Questions? Call NSEA at 1-800-742-0047.

Three Seek Presidency; Two File for Secretary Post

At SEAN's 2017 Delegate Assembly, members will choose a president-elect, a secretary and an underclass representative.

President-elect candidates must have at least four semesters of study remaining at election, as he or she will serve one year as president-elect, and a second year as state president. Three have filed for that office, while two have filed for a term as SEAN secretary. Candidates who are unsuccessful in their bid for president-elect may then seek election as secretary.

Members will also elect an underclass representative, nominated from the floor. Candidates must be a freshman or sophomore at time of election.

These members have filed for the office of president-elect for 2017-18:

London Bercey, Wayne State College
Expected Graduation: May 2020

For me, leadership takes dedication and integrity. I would be honored to be the secretary for SEAN. I was the president of an education club in high school, and taking a leadership position was something I loved. Education isn't just my passion; it is a part of my life I am devoted to make a difference in. I am ready to take on the challenge of being a leader.

Dana Blaze Livingston, University of Nebraska-Lincoln
Expected Graduation: May 2020

As a second-year student (a junior by credits), I am academically versatile and I understand both sides of education. I want to be the SEAN Secretary because I skillfully organize and plan. I also want the experience of this position; I've only seriously planned with my fraternity and study groups.

Megan Wallace, Peru State College
Expected Graduation: May 2019

I am a sophomore at Peru State College. I am an executive member for our campus club. I am involved a lot through my campus club, I attend almost every conference that comes my way. I love to be involved and help better the education system. I love helping people and learning new things every day. I am very dependable and outgoing person to be around. I think I would be a great candidate for the secretary position at the state level.

These candidates have filed for the office of secretary for 2017-18:

Adrienne Marie Luella Kruger, Northeast Comm. College
Expected Graduation: December 2017

I attend Northeast Community College studying Elementary Education. This is my third year in SEAN. Reasons why I believe I will be a nice fit for this position: First, I have held this office at the chapter level while at Northeast, along with holding this position in other organizations. Second, as a person, officer, and student, I am very organized. I will make sure minutes are neat and legible and sent close to corresponding with upcoming meetings. I hope that you will select me for your 2017-2018 SEAN Secretary.

Miranda Speth, University of Nebraska Lincoln
Expected Graduation: December 2019

I am honored to be given the opportunity to run for SEAN secretary. The position would give me the opportunity to take a greater role in the organization, as well as the opportunity to give back and expand my connections and knowledge within the network of inspiring and dedicated individuals.

Legislature Proposes to Cut Your Retirement Plan

Reduced Benefit Would Affect New Hires, As Rule of 85 Moves to Rule of 90

SEAN members haven't started their professional teaching careers yet, but some of them have taken note of a proposal before the Nebraska Legislature that would cut the retirement benefits they hope to receive some 30 years down the road.

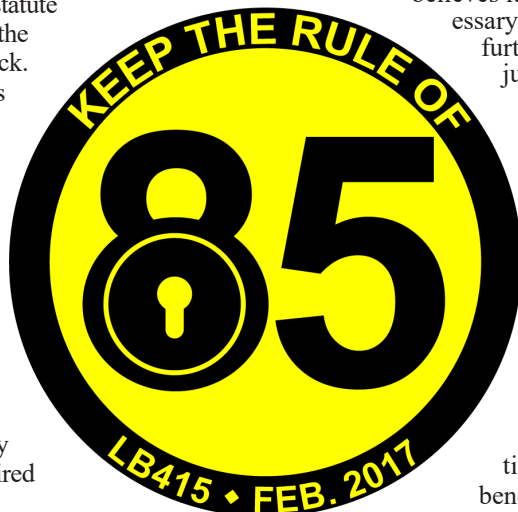
Offered by Seward Sen. Mark Kolterman, LB415 would alter what is called the "Rule of 85."

The Rule of 85 allows a teacher who has taught at least 30 years and has reached the age of 55 to retire with a monthly pension from the Nebraska Public Employees Retirement Plan. Teachers who choose that early retirement option do so knowing that the monthly benefit at age 55 is less than the benefit they would receive were they to remain in the profession until age 56, 59 or 62, for instance.

Educators are required by state statute to put 9.78 percent of their pay into the state retirement system each paycheck. Their employing school district adds 9.81 percent of a teacher's salary to their retirement account. At retirement, the teacher receives a defined monthly pension, based on years of service and salary earned.

LB415, however, would add at least five years to a teacher's career by setting the early retirement age at 60, and moving the early retirement program into a Rule of 90. LB415 would apply only to those school district employees hired after July 1, 2017.

Kolterman's reasoning? A study of the state pension shows that plan members are living longer, which means they are taking out more money than projected. In order to lessen the cost of retirement benefits, Kolterman has proposed the Rule of 90.



The state retirement plan for educators is already bifurcated, meaning there are two sets of benefit programs in the plan. The legislature lowered retirement benefits in 2015 for educators hired after July 1, 2015. Adopting LB415 would mean the plan has been trifurcated, with three classes of benefits for educational employees.

NSEA strongly believes it is unnecessary to make further adjustments to the school plan. The plan

is financially sound and although projections show additional contributions will be needed in four years, making a change now would be premature.

SEAN State President Denton Beacom, a senior at Wayne State College, plans to testify in opposition.

The Legislature's Retirement Committee, which Kolterman chairs, will hold a hearing on LB415 on Monday, Feb. 27. Beacom plans to testify. SEAN members who care about their retirement benefits might plan to attend in support of Beacom and NSEA. **The hearing will start at the state capitol at 4:30 p.m. Register online at www.nsea.org/LB415**

Contact NSEA's Tamra Mick at 1-800-742-0047 for details. Or reach her at:

tamra.mick@nsea.org



Consider Service as a SEAN Regional Representative

Those who serve as leaders of the 1,400-member Student Education Association of Nebraska do serious work.

In exchange for that work, those officers also realize great benefit as officers and members of the SEAN Executive Committee.

Officers build leadership skills as they organize SEAN conferences and projects. They network with members, as well as with active teachers and leaders of SEAN's parent organization, NSEA. They may also travel regionally and nationally.

Delegates from the campuses will be grouped to choose a regional representative for 2017-18. Those representatives will perform duties as directed by the SEAN president.

■ Metro Region

- University of Nebraska-Omaha
- Grace University
- College of St. Mary
- Creighton

■ Northeast Region

- Wayne State College
- Northeast Community College
- Midland University
- Southeast Region
 - Peru State College
 - University of Nebraska-Lincoln
 - Doane College
 - Nebraska Wesleyan University
- Western Region
 - Chadron State College
 - University of Nebraska-Kearney
 - Hastings College
 - York College
 - Central Community College (all campuses)

Interested in serving? Talk to your campus advisor or reach Tamra Mick at 1-800-742-0047, or:

tamra.mick@nsea.org

CHAPTER REPORTS

University of Nebraska-Omaha

Members at the university of Nebraska at Omaha chapter have a busy schedule.

In November, members volunteered at the Youth Emergency Services location in downtown Omaha. Members sorted donated clothes and organized and packed bags of underwear for students to take home. Members hope to make the visit a monthly event.

In late December, members held a holiday party for all active members. Chapter President Elizabeth Milliken said the gathering allowed members to get to know each other a little better, to make gingerbread houses, and to talk about the ins and outs of education.

Members also have set their sights on an Outreach to Teach on April 22 at Mount View Elementary School in Omaha. Plans are to give the front of the school a face lift with new landscaping.

Becca Burkhardt is chapter vice president.

Nebraska Wesleyan University

Chapter members at Nebraska Wesleyan University had not had any events in 20117, as of this writing, but had held two planning meetings and delivered a newsletter to members. Chapter President Brooke Scheitel said school has just resumed from winter break.

"We have meetings planned for the next couple of months," she said. "We are very excited to get started and get going with this year."

A late-January meeting included time discussing plans for the SEAN statewide Spring Conference, to be held on the NWU campus.

"We wrapped up the meeting by talking about collecting and donating children's books to local and area elementary schools," said Scheitel. "We hope we have success with our new idea!"

Dallas Burrigh is chapter vice president.

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Chapter President Lynsey Coufal reports that members met in late January and have another meeting scheduled Feb. 22.

At the January meeting, UNL Department of Career Services Becky Faber spoke to members about career opportunities in the education field outside the classroom.

Evann Vrana is the chapter vice president.

Midland University

Members at Midland have met twice this year. The first gathering was a discussion of upcoming events and dates and talk about how to make chapter meetings more successful. Then, in January, the chapter reserved a skybox at a Midland basketball game. All chapter members were invited as were local members of the high school Educators Rising chapter. All enjoyed a bite to eat and a chance to win a raffle prize.

Chapter Co-Presidents are Courtney Tjards and Melissa Wagner. Vice President is Megan Urzendowski.

Peru State College

Chapter President Allyson Scholl reports that members are preparing for the annual Dr. Seuss extravaganza on campus March 2-3. Members invite students from more than 30 area schools to enjoy a series of skits that feature characters created by Dr. Seuss.

"We are making props and practicing to perfect out skits," she said.

In mid-February, members decorated cookies for Valentine's Day and delivered them to the Good Samaritan Nursing Home.

Amanda Antholz is the chapter vice president.

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A Great & Grand Idea: \$1,000 for Student Teachers

NSEA-Retired Offers \$1,000 Stipends to Three SEAN Student Teachers

March 1 is the deadline.

That's when your application for one of three \$1,000 scholarships from the Nebraska State Education Association-Retired affiliate is due.

If you are a Student Education Association of Nebraska (SEAN) member who will soon enter your student teaching semester, you may apply for one of the three \$1,000 scholarships for use during your coming student teaching semester. The application deadline is Wednesday, March 1.

Applicants shall be college juniors or seniors who have been SEAN members for at least two years, including the current year. Scholarships will be awarded based

on financial need and answers to essay questions.

Each application shall also require three letters of recommendation: one from a faculty or staff member of the applicant's college or university; one from a local SEAN chapter officer; and one from the local SEAN chapter advisor.

Scholarships shall be effective for the student teaching semester. Checks will be issued jointly to the student and his or her college or university.

Mail applications to Tamra Mick, NSEA, 605 South 14th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508, and must be post-marked no later than March 1, 2017. Download the current application from this website:

www.nsea.org/SEAN

For details, contact Mick at 1-800-742-0047 or via e-mail at:

tamra.mick@nsea.org

Vrana, Beacom Head to Florida for NEA Summit

University of Nebraska-Lincoln education major Evann Vrana is one of 11 students from across the country selected to attend the National Education Association's Leadership Summit in Orlando Feb. 24-26.

The summit is designed to deliver a unified, strategic, and interdisciplinary approach to leadership development in educators that will reinforce and support leadership competencies in six strategic areas. The goal is to develop leaders and prepare them with the knowledge, skills and abilities to be effective in the classroom and their association.

In addition to 11 students, more than 1,000 educators from across the country are expected to attend.

Also attending is SEAN President Denton Beacom, a senior at Wayne State College. Beacom attended by virtue of his appointment to the NEA Advisory Committee of Student Members. Beacom is one of 10 student members from across the country chosen to sit on the committee.

A native of Wahoo, Vrana is a family and consumer science education major. As a junior, she is the Underclass Representative on the Student Education Association of Nebraska (SEAN) Executive Committee.

Vrana is also vice president of the university's SEAN Chapter, and is involved with the New Student Enrollment International Welcome Team.

Vrana also works with Studies of the United States Institute (SUSI) as a peer mentor; serves as an ambassador for the College of Education and Human Sciences (CEHS); serves on the CEHS Student Advisory Board; is a member of Students Together Against Cancer (STAC), and of the Nebraska Women's Leadership Network.

Beacom is a native of Hooper and a 2014 graduate of Logan View Public Schools. He is a senior at Wayne State College ma-



Beacom



Vrana

joring in elementary education with a supplemental endorsement in reading and writing. He plans to student teach in 2017.

Beacom is also a member of the Philomathean President's Honor Society, secretary of the Blue Key Honor Fraternity, a member of the American Red Cross Club, a TeamMates mentor, a Navigator and Telecounselor for the Wayne State College Admissions Department, and a participant in the Northeast Nebraska Teacher Academy (NENTA).

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Children's Fund Aids Kids in Need

Once you enter the classroom as a professional, accredited teacher, you'll quickly learn that many students struggle to learn as they are missing some of life's basic necessities. They lack proper nutrition, they are in need of medical care, their clothes are often unwashed and worn.



Educators often reach into their own pocket or purse to try to assist students in need. But for an individual teacher to meet the needs of every child is impossible.

Fortunately, the NSEA established the Children's Fund in 1994 to fulfill modest and immediate needs of students encountered daily by Association members in their workplaces.

Supported by donations, the Children's Fund makes funds available to SEAN and NSEA members. In some cases, the Fund supplements other sources of assistance, or cooperates with merchants to help a child with a more complex problem. The Fund will work to ensure that the physical, social and emotional needs of students do not stand in the way of their success in school.

As a SEAN member, during your student teaching semester, you may request funds to help a student in need through your cooperating teacher, if that teacher is an Association member. After you become an active teacher, your NSEA membership allows you to make similar requests.

The generosity of Children's Fund donors has helped to pay for glasses, warm clothing, medical and dental needs of children; provided assistance to a family whose home and belongings were destroyed by fire; purchased a bus ticket for a child with no other means to get to school; and more. As a 501c(3) corporation, your contributions to the NSEA Children's Fund are tax deductible.

To inquire about the Children's Fund, or to request funds for a child in need, call Sally Bodtke at NSEA at 1-800-742-0047, or e-mail her at:

sally.bodtke@nsea.org

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www.nsea.org/membership-card-goes-electronic



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NSEA will Assist with PRAXIS Prep

\$109,800 Grant to Aid Educator Rising Chapters, Help Teachers-to-Be

A grant to NSEA for \$109,800 will soon help many Nebraska teachers-to-be reach their dream of leading a classroom.

The National Education Association's Great Public Schools Fund grant will be used to encourage high school students, particularly students of color, to consider becoming teachers. The grant will also fund stipends for NSEA members to provide college students with seminars and tutoring to assist them in passing the Praxis Core Academic Skills for Educators Test.

If you are a college student interested in such seminars or tutoring, contact NSEA Organizational Specialist Mike Wiesen. He is organizing the seminars and tutoring sessions at several locations across the state. Reach him at 1-800-742-0047, or at:

mike.wiesen@nsea.org

The Praxis, as it is commonly called, is designed to determine whether candidates for education programs can demonstrate "basic skills competency" in reading, writing and mathematics. For a candidate to be admitted to a Nebraska teacher preparation program, he or she must first pass the Praxis basic skills tests.

"Fewer and fewer students are choosing to become teachers," said NSEA President Nancy Fulton. "There has been a 20 percent drop in the number of students enrolled in Nebraska colleges of education over the past 5 years and a 50 percent drop over the past dozen years. This grant will significantly help to reverse that trend by recruiting, mentoring and engaging a diverse faculty to meet the needs of our diverse students."

NSEA plans to work with local associations and other partners to organize a statewide cadre of mentors for the Praxis Mentoring Program; to build a robust mentoring program; to recruit college students to the program; and to develop an online course with a facilitated, ongoing edCommunities group.

The NEA Great Public Schools Fund grant will finance a three-part approach.

- It will fund stipends for NSEA teacher members to lead an overview course on the Praxis to interested college and university students at six locations: state colleges at Wayne, Peru and Chadron; at Kearney; at Lincoln; and in the Omaha metro area.

- It will pay NSEA teacher members to provide one-on-one or small group mentoring to teachers-to-be in the reading, writing and math skills needed to pass the Praxis.

- It will provide a stipend to NSEA members who organize a local chapter of Educators Rising, an organization for high school students considering teaching as a career. The grant will also provide funding for programming needs at the local chapters. The goal is to connect

high school students with teacher education programs at Nebraska's colleges and universities.

All teachers-to-be may participate. Fulton said there will be a strong focus on recruitment of all ethnic minority students because the growing number of children of color in Nebraska schools have few role models of color leading classrooms. In most cases, the number of ethnic minority teachers in Nebraska classrooms fall far short of the number of ethnic minority students in the state's public schools.

"This is a 'demographic mismatch' that matters," said Fulton. "Students of color need teachers

who not only set rigorous standards, but teachers who can provide models of professional success. Teachers of color have demonstrated success in increasing the academic achievement of students of similar backgrounds."

The goal is to offer the first round of Praxis study seminars and tutoring in early to Spring 2017.

This project is made possible by a grant from the National Education Association's Great Public Schools Grant Fund. GPS Fund Grants are awarded to help enhance the quality of public education by developing, implementing and leading an agenda that engages NEA members and allies in work that emphasizes student-centered success through union led efforts.

"This is a 'demographic mismatch' that matters. Students of color need teachers who not only set rigorous standards, but teachers who can provide models of professional success. Teachers of color have demonstrated success in increasing the academic achievement of students of similar backgrounds."

***— Nancy Fulton,
NSEA President***

Never Been to Boston? Attend NEA Representative Assembly

Next stop, Beantown!

Perhaps more appropriately, it should be said that NSEA delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly in 2017 will be participating in the world's largest democratic deliberative body in this nation's Cradle of Liberty — Boston, MA. Up to three members of SEAN are eligible to attend as delegates, as well.

Every July, up to 9,000 American educators gather to talk about issues and challenges facing public schools. NSEA, as a state affiliate of the NEA, sends about 100 delegates. This year's event will take place June 30 - July 5.

Members of the Student Education Association of Nebraska (SEAN) elect their RA representatives by statewide balloting. SEAN members wishing to file as delegates must complete an online filing process by Sunday, April 2. Voting will take place online during April 3-12. Watch The Voice and the SEAN newsletter for details, or contact NSEA's Tamara Mick for more information. She can be reached at 1-800-742-0047 or at:

tamra.mick@nsea.org



A Light Moment: Your 2016-17 SEAN Executive Committee, caught in a light moment at the 2016 SEAN Spring Conference, are, seated from left: Evann Vrana, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Hannah Smith and Denton Beacom, Wayne State College; Madison Kinney, York College. Standing, from left, are Ali Johnson, Hastings College; Mikayla Nelson, Nebraska Wesleyan University; Elizabeth Milliken, University of Nebraska-Omaha; and Bailey Schlueter, Wayne State College.

2016-2017 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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Do You Know an Ever-Achieving Underclassman?

The SEAN Underclassman Involvement Project is an ideal opportunity for future leaders in the education profession.

The recognition encourages current freshman education majors to become involved at the state and possibly national levels of the student program.

Any freshman SEAN member may apply for this opportunity; some experience in the SEAN program is helpful. The recipient will be designated to attend SEAN state conferences and planning meetings of the SEAN Executive Committee, and other events as

appropriate.

Applications for the recognition are due March 15, 2017. Among the first duties: the recipient will attend the NSEA Delegate Assembly on Friday and Saturday, April 21-22, as a non-voting delegate. To apply, go to:

<http://bit.ly/UnderclassAward>

For more information, or if you have questions, contact Tamra Mick (tamra.mick@nsea.org) or at 800-742-0047.