

THE VOICE

The Nebraska State Education Association ❖ December 2015

**Nudged in the
Right Direction**

TIM ROYERS

**2016 NEBRASKA
TEACHER OF THE YEAR**

- Outlook Good for School Retirement Plan
- A National Board Certification Game Changer!



Upcoming Assignments

Is It Your Time to Lead?

Jan. 1

■ **What:** Association members will vote early next year to fill nearly three dozen vacancies on six NSEA district boards and on the NSEA Board of Directors. An emphasis again this year encourages minority members to seek office.

■ **Details:** The filing period opens on Jan. 1. See the list of vacancies and deadlines on Page 20.

Nebraska Legislature

Jan. 6

■ **What:** The Nebraska Legislature convenes in a month, and senators will certainly have scores of education-related bills to propose. Some of those bills will benefit students, teachers and public schools, others could hurt those efforts.

■ **Details:** Keep a close watch on education issues as they develop by watching the NSEA website at nsea.org or by reading *The Voice* each month, and by signing up for NSEA's Legislative updates, go to:

nsea.org/nsea-text-messaging

Never too Early to Plan for RAA

■ **What:** Celebrate the birthday of Dr. Seuss on NEA's Read Across America Day, Wednesday, March 2. Start now for a well-planned event.

■ **Details:** NEA provides plenty of materials to make your event a success. To learn more go to this site: nea.org/grants/plan-a-reading-event

Teachers: Get Funding for National Board Certification

Legislature Provides Funding to Cover Majority of Certification Costs

There is great news for teachers seeking National Board Certification!

During the 2015 session of the Nebraska Legislature, state senators appropriated funding to reimburse the registration costs – up to \$1,975 – for those educators who seek National Board Certification.

The NBC designation is managed by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and is the most respected professional certification available in education today. The program was designed to develop, retain and recognize accomplished teachers, and to generate ongoing improvements in schools nationwide.

Teacher licensure systems set basic certification requirements in each state, but National Board Certification signifies that teachers have, of their own volition, gone much further.

The two-year funding for the National Board Certification program came with the approval of LB185, introduced by Lincoln Sen. Kate Bolz. NSEA gave LB185 full support, and Lincoln Education Association member Sherry West, testified before the Legislature's Education Committee in favor of LB185. West said the certification process was both difficult and worthwhile.

"I examined current research on best

practice, I watched videos of myself teaching and wrote about how my work could be improved," West told senators. "I was asked to provide rationale on every decision I made in designing a lesson, implementing a lesson, in how I assessed student learning and provided student feedback. The process brought a renewed awareness to my work – what could easily have been turned over to auto-pilot after so many years."

NSEA Organizational Specialist Jay Sears also testified in favor of LB185, and

said the benefits far outweigh the cost of the program.

"Any assistance we can give to teachers to improve their skills is money well spent," he said. "Nebraska students will clearly benefit from this program."

LB185 also appropriated funding for \$5,000 annual salary bumps for educators who currently hold National Board Certification. Educators with such certification should contact their administration to apply for the salary bonus.

For more details on National Board Certification, click on the 'Master Teacher Website' link at this site:

education.ne.gov/EducatorPrep

Questions? Send a note to this email address:

NDE.adultprograms@nebraska.gov

"The process brought renewed awareness to my work..."

— Sherry West,
Lincoln Education Assn.

Cover Story:

Tim Royers was already headed to the teaching profession when he received an e-mail from one of his professors. That e-mail nudged Royers to a new level of teaching, and today he is Nebraska's Teacher of the Year. For details, turn to

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The Lucky Ones



**NSEA President
Nancy Fulton**

“
Clearly,
Nebraska
students and
teachers —
and students
and teachers
in all parts of
the world —
face incredible
challenges.”

Every single day, in classrooms around the globe, children gather together for the singular goal of learning.

Children at all points in the world walk, skip, run and ride to school where they make friends, laugh, and most importantly, where they learn. They learn about themselves, about their neighborhood, about their world and about the universe around them.

They cannot do any of that without a teacher.

There is a video circulating on the Internet that gives a brief and fascinating glimpse into classrooms around the world. Compiled by the Reuters News Service, the video provides views of dozens of classrooms, from Canada to Columbia, from Vietnam to South Africa. The classrooms vary in size and shape. Most are indoors, some are outdoors. Some are well-decorated, some are simple in nature. Kids are smiling, laughing, giggling – just being kids. Most of the videos include a view of that key classroom ingredient, the teacher.

These children are the lucky ones. They are learning.

No Chairs, Books, Buildings

According to the story accompanying the video montage, the United Nations reports that “the number of children not attending primary school has plummeted to an estimated 57 million worldwide in 2015.” Fifteen years ago, when the Millennium Development Goals called for universal primary school education, 100 million children were out of school.

So while even one child going uneducated is too many, progress is being made. Yet many schools lack teachers, chairs, electricity and books. Some lack buildings, Reuters reports. “But children seem willing to learn anywhere. Classes are in corridors in the Philippines, onboard boats in Brazil and in a local park in Pakistan.”

Clearly, children in America, and here in Nebraska, are quite fortunate. Check the video at this site:

widerimage.reuters.com/story/schools-around-the-world

The Golden Buddha

Watching these videos reminded me of the

Nebraska Teacher of the Year luncheon held at the NSEA Headquarters this past November. At that event, five wonderful Teacher of the Year finalists were featured, all of whom spoke eloquently about their classrooms, their craft and their students.

One educator said he underestimated the power of teaching, and told those in attendance that “this career has allowed me to receive 12 years of thanks – and that is something I did not see coming.”

Another compared his profession to the story of the famous Golden Buddha statue, discovered in Thailand in the 1950s. Covered with stucco and bits of glass several hundred years ago to prevent the statue’s theft by invaders, the inner value of the Buddha was soon forgotten. In the early 1950s, workers were moving the statue to a new building, and part of the stucco was knocked off. With the inner beauty and value uncovered, workers carefully cleaned the 9-foot statue to its former glory.

Teaching is like those workers, slowly chipping away to pull out the true ability and value of each child, he said.

Married at 14

A third finalist told the story of a young Afghani student in her classroom who was determined to learn about budgeting. The child did not understand decimal points or dollar signs when she started, and yet was determined, sometimes to the point of tears, to learn. The teacher stayed through lunch hours to help her, worked with her and eventually discovered the reason for her tenacity: she had been married since age 14, and was expected to manage the family finances.

Clearly, Nebraska students and teachers – and students and teachers in all parts of the world – face incredible challenges. As I said earlier, Nebraskans are fortunate. Scottsbluff’s Shelby Aaberg told the Teacher of the Year finalists that he was impressed with what he saw in his tour of Nebraska as the state’s 2015 Teacher of the Year.

“I’ve been in classrooms all across Nebraska. There are champions in front of our students.”

Indeed there are. Thank you for being among them!



Finding Nebraska’s Great Public Schools (GPS)

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

Arapahoe	Page 9, 23	Bancroft-Rosalie	Page 23	Holdrege	Page 24	Papillion-LaVista	Page 9
Axtell	Page 24	Bellevue	Page 15	Kimball	Page 23	Peru State College	Page 13
		College of Saint Mary	Page 13	Midland University	Page 13	University of Nebraska-Omaha	Page 12
		Doane College	Page 13	Millard	Page 7, 9	Wayne State College	Page 12
		Douglas County West	Page 23	Norfolk	Page 23		
		Hastings	Page 9	Omaha	Page 15		



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Eskelsen Garcia to Headline 150th Kickoff

Reserve the date now, and make plans to be in Lincoln on April 15: the 2016 edition of NSEA’s Delegate Assembly is going to be special!

NSEA will kick off the Association’s 150th anniversary celebration at Delegate Assembly 2016 and NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia will be on to hand keynote the event.

Garcia’s is a true fame-to-fortune story. She began her career in education as a school lunch lady and today leads the professional association of more than three million educators.

“Lily’s story is one of an amazing rise to the top of her profession,” said NSEA President Nancy Fulton. “She is a gifted speaker, is articulate and she may even bring along her guitar and sing to delegates.”

Garcia is scheduled to speak on Friday night, April 15, as delegates meet at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Lincoln. The Assembly will continue on Saturday, April 16. Saturday’s event will include action on Association business items, as well as presentation of several awards, including NSEA’s highest honor, the Friend of Education (See page 6 for details).

Prior to assuming the NEA presidency, Eskelsen Garcia served



Eskelsen Garcia

two terms as NEA vice president and two terms as NEA secretary-treasurer. She became a vocal critic of the standardized testing movement and raised alarms on the outside role that testing is playing in public education: taking over the time students spend in the classroom, being used as a weapon against their teachers, and distracting from the real problem of unequal opportunities for students.

She is the first Latina to lead the NEA and one of the country’s most influential Hispanic educators.

Her new role is an extension of her teaching days in Utah. She was named Utah Teacher of the Year in 1989 after nine years in the classroom. She also worked with homeless children and gifted children; as a mentor for student teachers; and as a peer assistance team leader at Orchard Elementary School in the suburbs of Salt Lake City.

In 1998 she attempted to put her 20 years of experience working with small children to practical use by becoming her party’s nominee for the U.S. Congress. The rookie effort didn’t work out but she made her mark: She was the first Hispanic to run for Congress in her state and earned 45 percent of the vote against an incumbent.

Retirement Plan Gained Strength in Past Year

Funding Ratio Improves Over Past Year; Long-term Outlook Good

“Funding levels continue to improve.”

That was the assessment of the Public Employees Retirement Board Vice Chairman Richard Wassinger as the joint meeting of the Nebraska Public Employees Retirement Systems Board and the Nebraska Investment Council got under way in mid-November.

That theme carried throughout the annual meeting as members of the retirement board and the investment council received the annual actuarial report of the Cavanaugh Macdonald Consulting firm, and the third quarter performance review by the Aon Hewitt Investment Consulting firm.

The retirement board manages the intake and disbursement of retirement plan dollars for school employees, judges, and the state patrol, as well as state and county employees. The investment council manages the investment of funds for those plans.

The consultant reports indicated that, as of the end of the fiscal year on June 30, the state’s retirement plan for teachers had gained in strength and standing. Cavanaugh Macdonald’s Brent Banister said more money is going into the plan at the moment than is being spent on benefits.

Between member and employer contributions (\$383 billion) and investment income, the school plan grew by more than \$736 million. Benefit payments during the

School Retirement Plan Facts	
The figures are from the report on the Nebraska Public Employees Retirement System plan by Cavanaugh Macdonald LLC, an actuarial consulting firm. The numbers are as of July 1, 2015.	
Active Members.....	40,994
Benefit Recipients.....	21,512
Annual Benefit Payments.....	\$488,368,407
Plan Assets 7/1/14.....	\$9,450,980,000
Plan Assets 7/1/15.....	\$9,685,820,000
Funded Ratio 7/1/14.....	83 percent
Funded Ratio 7/1/15.....	88 percent

past year were just over \$502 million.

“We’re now funding the plan at a rate that is higher than the cost of the plan,” he said.

Specifically, the school plan:

- Went from 83 percent funded to 88 percent funded in the past year. Two years ago, the plan stood at 77 percent funded.

- Saw the actuarial value of the plan grow from \$8.62 billion to \$9.45 billion.

- Saw the market value of the plan grow from \$9.45 billion a year ago to \$9.685 billion on July 1 of this year. On July 1, 2013, the plan had a market value of just \$8.01 billion.

- Enjoyed a 3.8 percent rate of return on the market value of the plan, and an 11.5 percent return on the actuarial value of the plan.

Cavanaugh Macdonald’s Pat Beck-

ham said one reason for the significant gains was that no cost of living increase was granted to plan retirees in July. The COLAs are tied to the Consumer Price Index for Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W).

“It’s an unusual year when you gain on assets and on liabilities,” she said.

Banister said no additional state contributions to the plan will be needed at this time.

Further, he said the school plan should hit the 100 percent funded level in 2021. Cavanaugh Macdonald projections indicate that, on the present course, the school plan would be 160 percent funded in about 30 years. If those numbers hold true, Banister said that at some point there will “need to be conversation about what do we do about this.”

Retirement plans for state patrol and judges also gained in strength in the past year, said the consultants. Plans for judges (93 to 97 percent) and state patrol (81 to 87 percent) also gained in strength over the past year. Educators make up about two-thirds of the members in the state retirement plan.

Fulton to Senators: State Aid Lacking

Urges Improving Revenue Stream Using Other Sources

NSEA President Nancy Fulton has given a clear message to state senators studying Nebraska's over-reliance on property taxes.

The core of the issue, said Fulton, rests on the fact that Nebraska ranks 49th in state aid to public schools.

"That is the primary reason property taxes are so high in Nebraska when compared to other states," she told members of the Legislature's Education and Revenue committees in mid-November.

Senators are exploring proposals to ease the property tax burden before the Legislature convenes on Jan. 6. The joint committee took more than eight hours of testimony in its only public hearing. Fulton, with 34 years of classroom experience, said she has seen school financing issues create problems with classroom learning.

"Whether it leads to schools cutting back education programs; or eliminating teaching jobs, thereby causing class sizes to expand; these financing decisions significantly af-



Fulton

fect the classroom learning environment," said Fulton. "That affects the teacher's ability to focus on their most important function: providing the best instruction possible to Nebraska children."

The fact is that Nebraska ranked 49th in state aid to public schools in 1991, and has not budged since.

"If the state does not provide adequate levels of financing to support

K-12 public education in Nebraska, then local school districts will have no choice but to rely even more heavily on revenue derived from local sources," said Fulton.

In order to ease the property tax burden, Fulton said NSEA urges senators to recommend that in addition to general state revenues, the Legislature recognize a dedicated source of revenue from another source be directed into the state aid formula.

Fulton suggested additional revenue might come from expanding the sales tax to pop and candy; raising the tobacco tax;

eliminating certain sales tax exemptions; tagging a portion, or all, of the revenues from an Internet sales tax; or directing a quarter cent of sales taxes to state aid.

"Regardless of the source," said Fulton, "an increase in state funding would reduce the high reliance by public schools on local property taxes."

Fulton also stressed that it is important to expand the number of equalized schools. Nearly two-thirds of Nebraska public schools are non-equalized and thus receive no state aid, beyond small amounts from income tax rebates and other sources.

"Simply put, the state has not maintained the needed level of support from its end."

In part, that is due to an ebb and flow of state revenues, said Fulton. Thus, Fulton also asked that the committee recommend the full Legislature consider a school revenue stabilization fund, or some other statutory mechanism, for smoothing out the highs and lows of state aid funding.

Ultimately, said Fulton, "by increasing state aid to education, the Legislature can begin the process of reducing local school districts' reliance on local property taxes, thereby reducing these taxes or slowing their overall growth."

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How Tim Royers Got The Nudge

to Become a Better Teacher (and Nebraska's 2016 Teacher of the Year)

Most teachers can recite the name of a teacher or two who influenced their decision to enter the teaching profession.

Tim Royers claims two college professors as influential – one who made Royers realize teaching was the path he would follow, and another who sent an e-mail that nudged Royers toward excellence.

By all accounts, Royers has become a very good teacher. Good enough, in fact, to be named Nebraska's 2016 Teacher of the Year.

State officials traveled to his Millard West High School classroom in October to make the official announcement to Royers and his students. He will serve as Teacher of the Year for the next year, representing Nebraska educators at events across the state and nation.

Recognized as Teacher of the Year finalists (see page 9) were Lori Boudreau, Papillion-LaVista High School; Lynn Hill, Millard South High School; Daniel Schaben, Arapahoe Public Schools; and Jayson Stoddard, Hastings Middle School. All are members of their professional organization: the Nebraska State Education Association.

A Dream Dashed

As a youth, Royers dreamed of being a fighter pilot. He is on his way to that dream and was prepping for the recommendation process to seek appointment to the Air Force Academy when he was told he was too tall. He could continue the application process, but his flying would be limited to tankers and the like, not the fighter planes as he had dreamed.

With that dream dashed, Royers briefly considered a career in computer science. But it wasn't until he was sitting in a lecture hall at Northwest Missouri State University that it became clear: teaching would be his chosen path. Royers' American History professor was absent that day and had asked Department Chair Dr. Richard Frucht to cover the class.

"I had always liked history, and this was such a dynamic lecture," said Royers. "I could see myself in front of a classroom in the same manner he was on that day. And I realized it was something I would enjoy."

Now Royers was headed down the path to a career teaching the social sciences, in particular, secondary history. But Royers says his conception of what it meant to be a teacher was somewhat limited. That changed with an e-mail that Royers says "influenced me to become the teacher that I am today."

On the Digital Carpet

In the Spring of 2005, Royers opened an e-mail from Dr. Tim Wall. "Dr. Wall called me to the digital carpet," Royers wrote in his Teacher of

Tim Royers

Education

- Bachelor's Degree, Northwest Missouri State University, 2007.

- Master's degree, History, University of Nebraska-Omaha, 2012.

Certification

- Grades 7-12 Social Sciences.

Memberships

- Second term, Millard Education Association Board of Directors.

- Third year as chief negotiator, Millard Education Association.

- National Speech and Debate Association.

Awards

- Twice (2011, 2015) Debate Coach of the Year, Nebraska District of the National Speech and Debate Association.

- 2011 Socrates Award for Coaching and Judging Contributions to the Debate Community.



the Year application.

Wall complimented Royers on his grade in the class, on his GPA and his test scores. Then he asked Royers “why do you just sit in the back of the class and not do anything.” The e-mail resulted in several realizations for Royers.

Initially defensive, Royers quickly realized his instructor was right. He also began to realize the responsibilities that educators bear.

“We are not just content delivery machines,” he said.

Admitting that he had always relied on his ability, he realized that he needed a better approach to his career. And there was yet another realization.

“It should not have taken until my sophomore year in college for someone to tell me that,” said Royers.

Today, Royers tries to find one student each year that he will push in a direction the student might not anticipate.

“I try to give back the nudge Dr. Wall gave me,” he said.

Five-Time Champs

Royers’ teaching assignment changed this year, and all of his classes are Advanced Placement courses. The extra load that assignment created caused him to give up coaching the Millard West debate team. That was a tough decision, considering his

debate teams had won five consecutive state titles.

Coaching is an integral part of the teaching process, he said, and is more than telling students “you are expected to do this. It is guiding them, as well.”

Royers’ classroom operates on a clear, transparent social contract. He tells students up front that the due dates for the seven full, graded essays they will write in his AP history courses will come with less notice at the same time the topics become more difficult. It’s an incremental process, he says, with a purpose and a goal: to get them ready for the national exam and college level writing expectations.

“Teaching is leading them to get to where you want them to be,” he said.

‘Battles You Can’t Fight’

The expertise Royers provides touches every classroom in the district: Royers is also the chief negotiator for the Millard Education Association, and has served on the MEA Board of Directors since 2010.

His union membership, and union ideals, are ingrained, the result of grandparents on both sides of his lineage who were blue collar union folks.

“I feel, especially with my debate background, that I have a skill of advocacy and that I should use it,” he said. “A lot of members don’t feel comfortable in that role, and

that’s an area where I can help out.”

That advocacy has become easier with experience, and he can now share a growing list of real-life stories about Association advocacy and successes. By focusing on real issues that MEA has addressed, he can say “we met with the administration and solved this issue or that issue.”

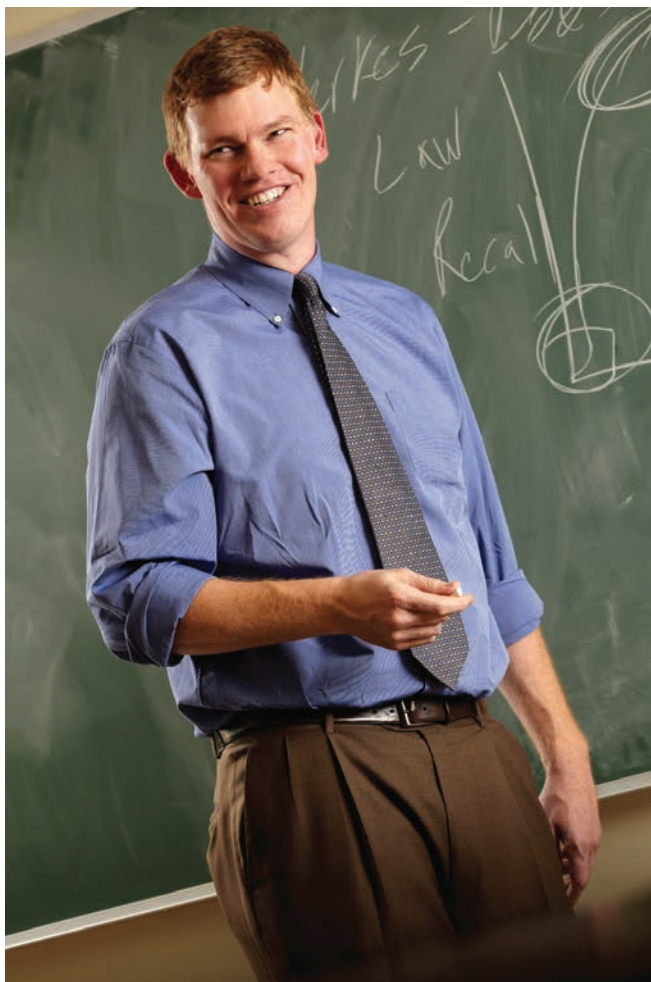
Solving such issues is important to members. Royers says he tells educators the Association “can fight battles you can’t and that you don’t have time to fight.”

Respectful Approach

Royers’ work with the Association has also affected his classroom. In his Teacher of the Year application, he wrote that his work with the Association included meetings with the highest level of leaders from the school district. Out of respect for district administrators, Royers said Association leaders always dressed well – with males in ties, if not suits – for those meetings. He soon realized that he should be dressing his best for the most important part of his job – teaching.

“For several years now I have worn at least a tie if not a full suit to work every day to show my students how important I think they are, and my instruction is,” he said.

That’s the kind of respect that might give a student a nudge toward excellence — perhaps in the education profession.



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Teacher of the Year: The Finalists

Thanks, Mr. Monson

Lori Boudreau, 9-12 English Papillion-LaVista High School

Like many teachers, Boudreau cites a teacher, Mr. Monson, as an influence. He encouraged an awkward and shy 13-year-old to run for class president, and she served as president of the student council for the remainder of her years in school.

Today, Boudreau says all of her accomplishments include her students, including the troubled student she met years ago. The ninth grader came from a broken home, was a known thief and an alcoholic. He was also bright, and Boudreau became his mentor in grades 10-12. She drove him to and from AA meetings, visited him on weekends when he was in a group home he had been sent to for unlawful acts, and helped his mother deal with parenting issues.

Fast forward, and he now has a degree in graphic design and is in the work force.

“I am so proud of him and so glad that I cared about that ninth grade student all those years ago. I like to think Mr. Monson would be proud of me,” she said.

Boudreau has an English degree from Graceland University and a master’s degree from Peru State College.

Three Amazing Boys

Lynn M. Hill, Marketing and Personal Finance Millard South High School

Her career began in the business world, and at one point she was traveling the Western U.S. in sales, with a company car and a home office. But the arrival of her “three amazing boys” changed her perspective.

“I began to think about where I could serve and what I could offer. And then, I remembered my two favorite teachers and knew what I needed to do,” said Hill.

She returned to school, and through an accelerated program at the University of Nebraska-Omaha, was eventually hired to teach at Millard South.

“Some days are challenging but most days, I smile and laugh out loud,” she said. “I love being with teenagers. They are a smart and curious group and I am helping them build their wings so they can fly the nest someday.”

Hill earned a business degree from Arizona State and a master of arts in teacher education from UNO.

The Work of an Artist

Daniel Schaben, 7-12 Mathematics Arapahoe Public School

Daniel Schaben’s father is a farmer and truck driver; his father-in-law is a land leveler. Both taught him that hard work and determination makes anything possible. “My desire to become a teacher was not on their radar nor mine, but their influence has taught me that no matter what I chose as a profession, hard work could turn my professional work into the work of an artist.”

The first years of teaching were rough. Teaching was complicated, and he was paid so poorly that his family qualified for social services. Then he became a member of Math in the Middle at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. “They showed me that teaching takes a lifetime to master, and that the fruits of the journey are the people we grow and change while we ourselves are constantly growing and changing.”

Schaben earned a bachelor’s degree at the University of Nebraska-Kearney in 1998, and a master’s degree from UNK in 2007.

A Sacred Triangle

Jayson Stoddard, Science Hastings Middle School

Jayson Stoddard says he was raised to be “compassionate, empathetic, hard-working, and free-thinking.” Through the mentorship of Hastings College Prof. Dr. Gilbert Adrian, Stoddard saw the impact he had on others through his “teachings, his ability to connect with his students, and his passion for what he was interested in...I wanted to be the same for others.”

Stoddard has taught science at Hastings Middle School since 2003. He says his greatest contribution through education has “been working day and night to inspire the sacred triangle of kids, parents, and the community. Pulling all three together has allowed me to creatively follow my passion of creating meaningful experiences and connections for those that do not have the same opportunities and relationships that I was afforded in my youth.”

He earned a bachelor’s degree in biology from Hastings College in 2001, and a master’s of arts in teaching from Hastings in 2003.

“I spend my days telling children that learning is important and education is important. So I think it’s important that they see that through what I model, not just what I say.”

Kelcy Tapp, elementary principal in Papillion and graduate of Doane’s bachelor’s, Education Specialist and both Master of Education programs.



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Eighteen Presidents!

Seventeen past presidents joined 2015-16 SEAN President Joel Schroeder on stage at SEAN's Fall Conference in Omaha in November. They are, front row, from left: Marsha Vodehnal Edquist, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1988-89; Mary Ann Lundeen Erickson, Nebraska Wesleyan University, 1958-59; Marilyn Brodhead Jussel, Nebraska Wesleyan University, 1959-60 and 1960-61; Vanessa Tanderup Brand, Wayne State College, 1998-99; Abby Barnes, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 1999-00; and Warren Mattox, Nebraska Wesleyan University, 1971-72.

Second row, from left: Dorothy Bock Willis, Peru State College, 1965-66; Megan Brown, Peru State College, 2012-13; Kay Talty Corell, University of Nebraska-Omaha, 1956-57; Colleen Heinz, Chadron State College, 1985-86; JoLynn Funk Julius, Midland University, 2003-04; Dave Stuva, Creighton University, 1978-79; Melinda Schneider, Wayne State College, 2006-07.

Third row, from left: Jessica Brauer, Nebraska Wesleyan University, 2007-08 and 2008-09; Tommie Leaders, University of Nebraska-Omaha, 2009-10 and 2013-14; Joel Schroeder, Wayne State College, 2015-16; Brad Wellmann, Nebraska Wesleyan University, 2002-03; Bill Woeppel, University of Nebraska-Kearney, 1975-76.

Nominate a Deserving Colleague

'16 Delegate Assembly Opens NSEA's 150th; What Better Time to Honor a Colleague?

From its founding in a small frame building in Brownville in 1867, to the past 80-plus years across the street from the State Capitol, NSEA has maintained a presence in Nebraska education policy.

Now, your Association will begin to celebrate 150 years of advocating for students and public schools at Delegate Assembly in Lincoln April 15-16, 2016.

That would be a wonderful time and place for one of your deserving colleagues to be honored for his or her work.

Any NSEA member may nominate a member teacher, ESP or deserving group for the awards to be presented at Delegate Assembly. Mailed nominations must be postmarked by Sunday, Jan. 31, 2016, and

should be sent to NSEA Awards, 605 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508-2742. Nominations may also be submitted online, with required supporting material mailed to the NSEA. Online nomination forms are found under the 'Call for Nominations' link at:

www.nsea.org

The 2016 Delegate Assembly, NSEA's 155th such convention, will be held at Embassy Suites in Lincoln. Association members are eligible for these awards:

■ **NSEA Rookie of the Year:** To honor a first-year teacher who sparked during his or her 2014-15 school year.

■ **Award for Teaching Excellence:** To honor a teacher who has excelled in the classroom over a long period of time.

■ **Education Support Professional of the Year:** To honor an ESP who has excelled in his or her job.

Finalists will be notified in March, with winners announced at the Delegate Assembly on Saturday, April 16. Recipients receive a \$250 cash award. The Teaching

Excellence recipient will also vie for the Teaching Excellence Award presented by the National Education Association.

NSEA members are also eligible for:

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

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

■ **Local Public Relations:** Honors local associations for outstanding communication within the association.

These awards will also be presented:

■ **Friend of Education:** Associations are encouraged to nominate an individual or organization that has made a statewide contribution to education. This is NSEA's highest honor.

■ **Media Award:** This honor recognizes a newspaper, television or radio station for coverage of education issues.

For more details, go to:

www.nsea.org

Ralston Sites Benefit from SEAN Outreach

Commissioner Blomstedt Tells Students: 'Worry About the Child in Front of You'

Students at Ralston's Mockingbird Elementary School and Middle School are enjoying spruced up buildings and grounds, thanks to a November outreach effort by members of the Student Education Association of Nebraska (SEAN).

More than 150 college student volunteers invested part of a mid-November weekend painting door frames and playground equipment, trimming and clearing tree limbs, raking and cleaning up school courtyards, deep cleaning a school library, freshening the grounds at a school entrance and leaving windows sparkling clean.

"The theme for this year's Outreach to Teach was 'Little Things Make a Big Difference,'" said SEAN President Joel Schroeder, a senior at Wayne State College. "This weekend, we did a lot of little things that we hope will make a big difference for the students and staff at Ralston's Middle and Mockingbird Elementary schools.

"This community service project is always fun and rewarding for SEAN members. Our hope is that our efforts serve to enhance the learning that goes on in these schools," said Schroeder.

The Outreach to Teach volunteer project was organized by SEAN's eight-member Executive Committee, and was part of the organization's Fall Conference. Nebraska Commissioner of Education Dr. Matt Blomstedt was the keynote speaker at the conference during a Friday night dinner that also celebrated SEAN's 60th anniversary.

Seventeen past presidents, including the organization's second, fourth and fifth presidents, were able to attend (see photo on page 11).

Blomstedt delivered a proclamation from the governor honoring the "significant contributions that members of SEAN have made to the State of Nebraska, to the children of this state, and to public education." Blomstedt also explained that, as commissioner, he is responsible for the education his five children and for the education of another 307,000 Nebraska children, as well.

"Every child has the same needs as my children, and some have more need," he reminded the teachers-to-be.

The reform movement that leans heavily on testing and accountability can undermine learning, he said. Children should be seen as children, and not as numbers.

"I need you to have the courage to do what is right," said Blomstedt, "and worry about the child in front of you first. Let the tests go where they may, but worry about that child in front of you."

Students will meet in Hastings Feb. 26-27 for the Spring Conference.



Dust Patrol: Above, Wayne State College students Breann Sweeney, Laura Moxness and Megan Friesen dust the back of a shelving unit at Mockingbird Elementary School.

Bag it up! Below, Katrina Milone, a University of Nebraska-Omaha student, shovels leaves into a bag as other SEAN members continue raking during the cleanup of the courtyard at Ralston's Mockingbird Elementary School.



Thumbs up: Wayne State College's Rileigh Burke and Kailey Rader show thumbs up after taping a classroom door prior to painting.



Outreach Scenes

Above: Pausing from raking duties for a moment — in their teaching superpower sweatshirts! — were College of Saint Mary's Brandi Kluch, Victoria Portch and Amber Jones.

Above right: Doane College's Alyssa Meyer and Sara Steinauer tackle a pile of playground brush.

Right: Midland University's Kaylee Sorensen flashes the victory sign after completing the taping around a window frame in preparation for painting.

Below: The Peru State College crew smiles as Chapter President Pamela Riffle gets ready to take a selfie of the group. Behind Riffle is Peru State College chapter advisor Dr. Judy Ruskamp.



Nebraska Grad Rates

The Nebraska high school graduation rates shows overall improvement since 2011. The Nebraska Department of Education began reporting graduation rates by the Four-Year Cohort method in 2011.

Year	Grad Rate	No. of Grads
2011	86.12	19,313
2012	87.63	19,317
2013	88.49	19,389
2014	89.66	19,493
2015	88.89	19,432

Blomstedt Praises Students, Teachers in Grad Rate Report

Commissioner of Education Dr. Matt Blomstedt praised the key components of public education – students and teachers – when he said late last month that the state’s public high schools graduated nine of 10 seniors in 2015.



Blomstedt

The 88.89 percent graduation rate represents a slight decrease from the nearly 90 percent graduation rate set the previous year, according to data released by the Nebraska Department of Education.

The public school graduation rate has, overall, steadily improved since 2011 when 86.1 percent of the high school seniors graduated in four years.

“While the substantive change is less than 1 percent and slight changes are expected, year-to-year, we will continue to closely watch the state’s graduation rate as we focus on graduating at least 90 percent of our high school students in four years,” said Blomstedt.

“We applaud the hard work of our high school seniors and their teachers considering that Nebraska public schools continue to have one of the highest graduation rates in the nation.”

The National Center for Educational Statistics reports Nebraska, Texas, Vermont and Wisconsin ranked second nationally in 2012 with an 88 percent graduation rate. Iowa maintained a rate of 89 percent.

The Nebraska 2015 report also showed that 91.8 percent or 19,987 of the state’s high school seniors graduated in five years and that 92.1 percent or 20,222 graduated in six years, with both of those rates improving from the previous year.

BCBS Request is Due Feb. 6

Use Stipends for Spring Courses

One of the many benefits of NSEA membership is the availability of Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska scholarships.

Three times each year, NSEA members are eligible to apply for a scholarship from Blue Cross and Blue Shield that will help make paying for graduate coursework a little easier.

The deadline for the next round of scholarships from the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Professional Development Fund is Saturday, Feb. 6.

Applicants for the scholarship will receive an e-mail confirming receipt of the application (if you do not receive an e-mail, call NSEA).

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



To apply, complete the application form on the NSEA website. The form will be on the website through Feb. 6.

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

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

Since 1986, 5,408 NSEA members have shared more than \$717,500 in Blue Cross and Blue Shield scholarship dollars. The program does not affect Blue Cross and Blue Shield premiums.

Find the application at:

www.nsea.org/scholarships

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

sally.bodtke@nsea.org

Bond Election in Your Future? Call Your Organizational Specialist

NSEA’s Field Staff Give You an Edge

If your school district is planning a bond election during the 2016 election season, NSEA can help.

Traditionally, local education associations work with administration and the school board to further the interests of the school district — including supporting passage of bond issues, which typically improve learning conditions for students, and working conditions for NSEA members.

Consider this question recently sent to NSEA through the ‘Contact Us’ link on the NSEA website:

“I am working with a group of district constituents who are dedicated to communicating information regarding and glean-ing support for a bond election. We were informed that NSEA may be able to assist in our efforts through the provision of election/school bond/Vote Yes! signs. If there is any manner in which we might be able to access signs for utilization in our election cam-

paign, we would be thrilled and extremely grateful. My hope would be to access 150-200 signs for immediate purposes, and I could return for more signs if we were to exhaust our first round of signs. Thank you for any direction or assistance that you might be able to offer.”

The question came from a parent and teacher in the school district, and the answer was “yes — NSEA does offer such assistance in school bond elections.”

NSEA gets many such questions each week, via e-mail through the website, phone calls to one of the 18 organizational specialists, and via personal visits with NSEA staff.

Whatever your question about your employment issues, classroom issues, bargaining situations — or even school bond elections! — know that you can contact your NSEA organizational specialist in complete confidentiality. Call your NSEA organizational specialist at 1-800-742-0047, or send your question through the ‘Contact Us’ feature of the NSEA website at:

www.nsea.org



EMAC Seeks RA Gains

Members Seek Compliance with NEA Goals

By Edward Ventura, Jr. Chair
Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee

Three NSEA members were in attendance at the National Education Association's Headquarters in Washington, D.C., in early November to discuss the NEA's 3-1(g) goals, which deals with minority membership in the Association.

Attending from Nebraska were NSEA President Nancy Fulton; Ethnic and Minority Affairs Committee Chair Edward T. Ventura, Jr., Omaha; and Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee Vice Chair Jose Hernandez, Norfolk.

NEA rules call for NSEA to submit a plan each Dec. 1 detailing how the association will meet the goal of 18 percent minority representation (based on Census figures) in the NSEA delegation at Representative Assembly. The NSEA Board of Directors and the Ethnic and Minority Affairs Committee must approve the plan.

Some highlights from NSEA's 2015-16 Minority Involvement Plan include:

- Exploring the need for an Ethnic Minority at-large seat on the NSEA Board of Directors.

- Encouraging the 1,049 NSEA members with an unidentified ethnicity (about 5 percent of NSEA's membership) to identify as one of these ethnicities: American Indian/Alaska Native; Asian; Black; Hispanic; Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian; Multiple Races; White; Other.

- Conducting multicultural book giveaways at NSEA events.

- Providing diversity panels at in-state conferences.

- Sponsoring social justice retreats and leadership trainings (June 2016, with Metro District).

NEA MLT Participants

NSEA has announced that four NEA-sponsored members will attend the Minority/Women's Leadership Training Conference in San



Caucus time: Members of the NSEA Ethnic and Minority Affairs Committee's Black Caucus discuss issues at a recent meeting of the committee. From left are Latunya Sumpter and Tanishia Butler, Bellevue; and Monica Wynne, Ayesha Station and Yano Jones, all of Omaha.

Francisco Jan. 29-31.

Attendees are Isau Metes, Lincoln; Anthony Williams, Omaha; Tanishia Butler, Bellevue; and Rosey Krauel, Douglas County West.

The Minority Leadership Training (MLT) program prepares educators to lead confidently and consciously by focusing on a student-centered agenda and social justice issues that affect students, schools and communities. The NEA training curriculum supports the needs of members at all levels of the leadership continuum —“emerging” to “experienced” leaders, appointed or elected to the highest local, state and national leadership positions.

Past attendees have given the program high marks:

- I became fully aware of many issues that teachers face each and every day,” said Che’ Drummond, Omaha.

- Lexington’s Karla Andazola said “I brought back a lot of new experiences, inspiration, and new information based on the mock campaign and RA.”

I am Algonquin: an Algonquin Quest Novel

This novel by Rick Revelle explores the life of Native Algonquins before European contact. It includes graphic explanations of hunting and how the animals were killed, but are important to the culture. The author is a Member of the Ardoch Algonquin First Nation, and has based the story on research and stories passed on through the oral tradition.

The story is easy to follow and has historical information to help the reader understand the lifestyle of the characters. It is from a male Algonquin perspective; other perspectives are not portrayed.

A glossary and pronunciation guide of Algonquin words that are used is included at the end. The bibliography is varied, and a list of museums can be useful in finding more information.

Reviewed by Maureen Fowler, NSEA member, Lincoln

Culturally Competent Educators

Question: There are (approximately) fewer than 50 unrecognized American Indian tribes in the United States. Is that statement:

a. True b. False c. Maybe

Answer: False

There are hundreds of unrecognized Native American Indian tribes in the United States. The state of California alone has a bit more than one hundred unrecognized tribes. Unrecognized Native American Indian tribes that have no federal recognition. If a tribe is unrecognized, the federal government has no obligation to them at all. Today, numerous tribes are trying to become recognized, according to Tracy Hartman-Bradley, a member of the Omaha Education Association and EMAC American Indian/Alaska Native representative.

When Post-Observation Notes Turn Up Red Flags, Call NSEA

State statute 79-828 requires that probationary teachers be observed for at least one class period during both semesters of their probationary years. It's important that all probationary teachers thoroughly read their observation reports and any walk-through observation notes.

To assist probationary teachers, local Associations might consider holding a meeting to help those educators and new

hires watch for indicators of concern or “red flags” in their fall observations. Members should be encouraged to contact their NSEA organizational specialist to share and discuss any problems or issues, or to simply ask questions about classroom performance. NSEA has resources to assist in that process.

For more details, contact your NSEA organizational specialist at 1-800-742-0047.

SPRING COURSES 2016

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ART 803-01	Art Education Research Methods	EDAD 848	Curriculum Planning (2 sections)	PHYS 872P-01	Science Curricula
ART 807P-01	Art Methods for Young Children	EDAD 853-01	School Business Management	SPAN 808P-01	Comparative Grammar
ART 844-01	History, Theories & Philosophies of Art Education	EDAD 854-01	Introduction to Educational Administration	SPAN 870P-01	Seminar in Spanish/Latin American Studies: Cuban Cinema
ART 845-02	Multicultural Art in the Elementary & Secondary Curriculum	EDAD 855-01	Supervision of Instruction	TE 800	Educational Research (2 sections)
ART 846-01	Seminar in Art Education	EDAD 859-01	Legal Bases of Education	TE 803	Philosophy of Education (2 sections)
ART 848-01	Art for Students with Diverse Needs	EDAD 869-01	The Principalship	TE 804	Curriculum Development in Multicultural Education (2 sections)
ART 850C-02	Painting	EDAD 870-01	Principal as Instructional Leader	TE 805P-01	Overview of Assistive Technology
ART 850D-02	Painting	EDAD 875-01	Activities Director	TE 808P-01	Human Relations
ART 855-01	Art Education in American Culture	EDAD 890-01	Intro to Educational Research	TE 826-01	Content Methods & Strategies for Teaching English as a Second Language
ART 895-01	Art Education Research Paper	EDAD 940-01	Administrative Theory	TE 831P-01	Professional Skills & Knowledge I
BIOL 802	Organic Evolution (2 sections)	EDAD 944-01	Seminar in Educational Administration	TE 832-01	Professional Skills & Knowledge II
BIOL 811-01	Scientific Illustration	EDAD 957-01	Public School Finance	TE 833-01	Context of Education
BIOL 812-01	Microbial Diversity	ENG 881P-01	Modern British and Commonwealth Literature	TE 834P-01	Transitional Student Teaching I
BIOL 813-01	Issues in Bioethics	FSID 850P-01	The Aging Adult	TE 835P-01	Transitional Student Teaching II
BIOL 814-01	Plant Pathology	FSID 886P-01	Families in Crisis	TE 836P-01	Post-Baccalaureate Student Teaching
BIOL 820-02	Introduction to Graduate Study	HIST 895P-01	TS: Digital History	TE 845-01	Contemporary Theory & Practice in Reading
BIOL 824-01	Principles of Ecology	HIST 801	America Interpreted (3 sections)	TE 846-01	Diagnosis/Correction of Reading Difficulties
BIOL 827-01	Biological Statistics	HIST 803	Historical Methods (3 sections)	TE 851-01	Principles of Early Childhood Education
BIOL 828-01	Human Evolution	HIST 848-01	ST: Readings in American History: History & Memory	TE 853C-01	Improvement of Instruction in Elementary School Language Arts
BIOL 830P-02	ST: Cell Structure & Function	HIST 848-02	ST: Readings in American History: Public History Administration	TE 854-01	Reading in the Content Areas
BIOL 830P-03	ST: The Six Global Mass Extinctions	HIST 848-03	ST: Readings in American History: US in Cold War Era	TE 864-01	Digital Storytelling
BIOL 830P-04	ST: Neglected Tropical Diseases	HIST 848-04	ST: Readings in American History: Hispanics in America	TE 869-01	Introduction to School Library Program
BIOL 830P-05	ST: Drugs & Their Actions	HIST 848-05	ST: Readings in American History: Native American	TE 870-01	Developing Web-Based Portfolios
BIOL 831A-01	Biological Research: Hypothesis & Justification	HIST 848-07	ST: Readings in American History: Constitutional Rights	TE 871-01	Collection Development & Management
BIOL 831B-01	Biological Research: Methodology	HIST 849-02	ST: Readings in World History: Readings in the 17th Century Europe	TE 878-01	Leadership in Instructional Technology
BIOL 831C-01	Biological Research: Annotated Bibliography	HIST 849-03	ST: Readings in World History: Modern France	TE 880-01	Management of Educational Technology
BIOL 831D-01	Biological Research: Data Collection	HIST 849-04	ST: Readings in World History: Readings in Russian Revolution	TE 886P	Technology Tools for Teachers (2 sections)
BIOL 831E-01	Biological Research: Statistical Analysis	HIST 849-05	ST: Readings in World History: Holocaust	TE 887-01	Electronic Media Production
BIOL 831F-01	Biological Research: Manuscript	HIST 849-06	ST: Readings in World History: Medieval Europe	TESE 826-01	Program Design for Gifted/Talented Education
BIOL 838-01	Essential Human Anatomy	HIST 849-07	ST: Readings in World History: German Military History	TESE 830-01	Consultation & Collaboration with Families & Agencies Serving Individuals with Disabilities
BIOL 839-01	Human Physiological Systems	MGT 893P-01	Social Responsibilities of Business: Issues & Ethics	TESE 861-01	Legal Issues in Special Education
BIOL 841-01	Virology	MKT 837P-02	Sales Management	TESE 863-01	Research Based Instructional Strategies for Students with Disabilities
BIOL 863-01	Biological Perspectives	MUS 800-01	Foundations of Music Education	TESE 867-01	Functional Behavior Assessment & Behavior Intervention Planning
BIOL 881	Current Issues in Biology (3 sections)	MUS 852-01	History of Twentieth Century Music	TESE 875P-01	Preparing Adolescents for the Post-Secondary World
BIOL 883-01	Aquatic Trophic Ecology	PE 841P-01	Physical Education for Elementary Schools	TESE 883-01	Intervention Strategies for Individuals with Behavioral & Emotional Disabilities
BIOL 886-01	Sexual Selection	PE 864P-01	Secondary School Health	TESE 879P-01	Teaching Social Skills to Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder
CHEM 821-01	Inorganic Chemistry II for High School Teachers	PE 873-01	Physical Education for Persons with Severe Disabilities	TESE 893-01	Program Development in Assistive Technology
CHEM 899-01	ST: Organic Chemistry for High School Teachers			VOED 899-01	Special Topics in Vocational Education
CSIT 828P-01	Data Communications & Distributed Processing				
CSIT 850P-01	E-commerce Information Systems				
CSIT 858P-01	Computer Security				
CSP 804P-01	Counseling & Mental Disorders				
CSP 855-02	Techniques of Counseling				
CSP 868-01	Student Development Theory				
CSP 875-01	Career & Lifestyle Development				
CSP 960-01	Globalization of School Psychology				
EDAD 842P-01	Administration of Special Education				

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'Like' NSEA and Spread the Good Word

NSEA Maintains Four Facebook Sites, Each One Likeable!

Many of us look to Facebook and other social media to keep in touch with family and friends. Social media can also be useful in following news events, trends and issues.

Social media platforms can also be quite useful in strengthening the cause, mission and message of your Association.

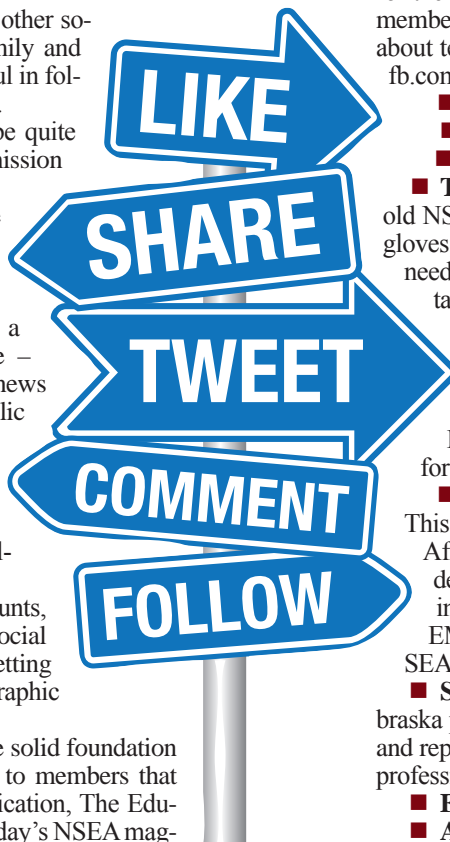
In order to spread the word, hit the 'Like' button on NSEA's Facebook pages!

NSEA maintains several public Facebook pages, and also manages a Twitter account and a Snapchat site – each of them useful in spreading news about the good work of Nebraska public schools and teachers. Also available, to members only, is a text alert service that lets educators know when immediate action might be needed in order to counter the advance of ill-advised policies or legislation.

"Utilizing our Facebook accounts, along with our website and other social media efforts, is an important part of getting NSEA's message out," said NSEA Graphic Artist and Webmaster Kristi Capek.

Those outreach efforts stand on the solid foundation of a communications outreach effort to members that began with NSEA's first printed publication, *The Educational Journal*, in 1872. But while today's NSEA magazine, *The Voice*, is made available to members only, the Association's social media efforts are available to the world.

"We all know that our Nebraska teachers do wonderful work. We are proud to be able to display the talents and abilities of our members to anyone and everyone," said Karen Kilgarin, NSEA director of



communications.

NSEA's Social Media Directory:

■ **The NSEA:** this page would be considered the "home" page for the NSEA Facebook presence. Breaking news, good news about members, information useful to educators and general discussions about teaching and public schools can be found at this site, at www.fb.com/nsea.org

■ **Find NSEA on Twitter:** @nsea_org

■ **Add NSEA on Snapchat as:** nsea.org

■ **Sign up to receive NSEA text alerts:** www.nsea.org/text

■ **The NSEA Children's Fund:** This page promotes the 21-year-old NSEA Children's Fund, which provides funding for coats, hats, gloves, eyeglasses and other necessities that would assist children in need. Any NSEA member who knows of a child in need can contact NSEA and request funding. There is no red tape, no forms to complete (see story elsewhere on this page). The Children's Fund Facebook page can be found at: www.fb.com/NSEACHildrensFund

■ **NSEA Delegate Assembly:** Planning to attend Delegate Assembly this spring? Find important information for that event at www.fb.com/NSEADelegateAssembly

■ **The NSEA Ethnic and Minority Affairs Committee:** This page promotes the work of the NSEA Ethnic and Minority Affairs Committee, founded in 1979 to promote respect and understanding of minority and ethnic groups, and to promote the involvement of minority members in their Association. The EMAC Facebook page can be found at: www.fb.com/EMAC-NSEA Follow on Twitter: @emac_nsea

■ **SEAN:** The page for the Student Education Association of Nebraska promotes the organization of student members. Event notices and reports are found here, as well as information about the teaching profession. The site is found at: www.fb.com/SEANebraska

■ **Follow SEAN on Twitter:** @nebsean

■ **Add SEAN on Snapchat:** Nebraska_SEAN

"We encourage NSEA members to 'Like' these pages – and to spread the word about NSEA and the efforts of our members and our Association," said Kilgarin.

She urged members to check out the NSEA website at:

www.nsea.org

Tap the Children's Fund to Help Those in Need

NSEA Children's Fund Makes a Difference

When teachers and students walk into the classroom at the start of each day, the intent is to have a good, solid day of teaching and learning.

Educators know however, that not every child is ready to learn. Some come to school hungry. Some come to school cold. Some come to school in the same clothes they've worn for the last two weeks.

A child in need cannot give 100 percent to the task of learning. Every teacher wants to



help every child, and teachers often use their own cash to help their students. Because a teacher cannot help every child he encounters, NSEA founded the Children's Fund in 1994. When an NSEA member spots a child in need of a basic necessity, all that member needs to do is call or e-mail the NSEA, describe the situation, and in a matter of a day or two, funding can be made available to assist the child or the child's family meet reasonable needs.

Consider this recent letter of thanks from an NSEA member who used the Children's Fund:

"I just wanted to thank you for the assistance you provided at our school recently. Late on a Friday afternoon, we discovered one of

our families had their electricity disconnected. With your assistance, we were able to get the electricity re-connected for this family. I am so thankful that we have this resource for our students and their families."

The Children's Fund relies purely on donations from members, from local associations and from outside donors who understand the need and see the Children's Fund as a just cause. NSEA members are the biggest contributors to the fund, and the fund is always in need. In the past two years alone, the Children's Fund has provided nearly \$90,000 in relief.

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

sally.bodtke@nsea.org



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Don't miss out on all the savings. Sign up today, and you'll save on dining, entertainment, clothes, electronics, travel, and more in thousands of locations with:

- ▶ **Exclusive discounts** not available to the general public.
- ▶ **WOWPoints** for purchases that you can redeem like cash.
- ▶ **NEA Click & Save** benefits to share with 4 friends and family.

Register now at neamb.com/clickandsave

nea *Member Benefits*



FINANCE



INSURANCE



DISCOUNTS



TRAVEL



PROFESSIONAL

Save With Dave

In this month's column, we're going to highlight the NEA Click & Save program "Buy-Lights" for December.

NEA Click & Save is the online discount buying service for NEA members, which highlights select retailers and merchants each month. With holiday shopping in full swing, this is the perfect way to shop for friends and family!

For up-to-date information on all merchant discounts, shipping terms and other details, find the NEA Click & Save page at: neamb.com/clickandsave

These are the featured items for December:

■ **NEAMB Entertainment Store:** Exclusive member pricing on world-class performances and entertainment including Broadway shows, movie tickets, and deals at SeaWorld, Six Flags, Universal Studios and LEGOLAND.

■ **NEAMB Electronics Store:** Get member pricing on merchandise from name brands like Panasonic, Samsung, Dell and Canon.

■ **Wine Country Gift Baskets:** Choose from a huge selection of gourmet foods, wine, chocolate and spa gifts.

■ **GameStop.com:** Get the latest releases from the largest video game retailer.

■ **Toys R Us:** Free shipping to your local store.

■ **Under Armour:** Get free shipping on orders of \$45 or more.

■ **Famous Footwear:** Free shipping on orders of \$75 or more.

■ **Easy Spirit Shoes:** Save on stylish, comfortable footwear.

Be sure to check Click & Save often for unadvertised, limited time offers, including discount dining certificates from Restaurant.com. Join the 377,500 NEA members already registered with Click & Save.

NEA Wireless

Using the NEA Wireless plan, members save 15 percent on AT&T cell phone service. Members also earn free use of AT&T's 34,000 Wi-Fi spots across the United States. Enjoy blazing fast speeds on the nation's largest 4G network.

Learn more NEA Member Benefits car rentals, and all the other great NEA Member Benefits programs at:

neamb.com

David Glenn is Nebraska's NEA Member Benefits representative



Glenn

10 Steps...

To Help Protect Against ID Theft When Shopping This Holiday Season

With a few common-sense precautions and the NEA Member Benefits-backed LifeLock at your back, you can enjoy a happy holiday season.

LifeLock powers the NEA Identity Theft Protection Program. Enroll today and enjoy the protection and peace of mind of a leader in the identity theft protection service. Learn more at:

neamb.com/shopping-discounts/nea-identity-theft-protection-program.htm

LifeLock offered these 10 ideas to protect against identity theft.

Use a Secure Site When Shopping Online

To make sure a site is secure, you can look for "https" rather than "http" in the Web address of the page that asks for your credit card information. You can also look for an icon of a locked padlock at the bottom of the screen, which is another sign of a secure site.

Never Shop Through Email

Email is an easy way for hackers to intercept your personal information. In addition, many times emails targeting shoppers are not legitimate, but part of a scam.

Check Your Statements Twice

Especially during the holiday season, check your statements to be sure all of your purchases are accurate. Anything that looks suspicious could be a red flag that your personal data has been compromised.

Be Leery of People Looking Over Your Shoulder

When out shopping, there has been a recent trend of identity thieves snapping a photo, usually through their smartphones, of shoppers' credit cards. The person waiting behind you in line may look like he or she is texting, but you might be offering them a glimpse of your credit card information, of which the thief is making

a permanent record.

Pay with Credit or Cash

Pay with cash or a credit card rather than a debit card, both in store and online. When paying with cash, no personal data can be compromised, and credit cards are the next best alternative, since they typically offer better ID theft protection than debit cards.

Write 'Check Photo ID' on the Back of Your Credit Cards

This is just another measure to ensure no one will use your credit card in stores. If a cashier checks your card against your photo ID, it adds another layer of protection.

Don't Leave Valuables in Your Car When Shopping

Parking lots are a popular hotspot for identity thieves looking to steal personal information. These thieves can keep an eye out for exactly when you arrive and strike early, knowing that you are unlikely to return to your car anytime soon.

Keep Money & Credit Cards in a Safe Place

Beware of pickpockets, especially in crowded malls and around major distractions, such as photos with Santa.

Be Sure Charitable Donations are Given to Legitimate Organizations

Be careful of phishing scams and unofficial websites when making charitable donations this holiday season. Whenever in doubt, look the organization up through the Better Business Bureau before contributing money.

Be Proactive

Copy both sides of your credit cards and keep them in a safe place at home. In case they are stolen, you will be able to quickly contact the necessary banks and put a hold on your cards. No one can prevent all identity theft.



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Make it Happen: Lead!

NSEA Leadership Positions Open in Six Districts, on NSEA Board

Teachers in Nebraska are leaders – they lead in their community, in their churches, in fraternal organizations and in their profession.

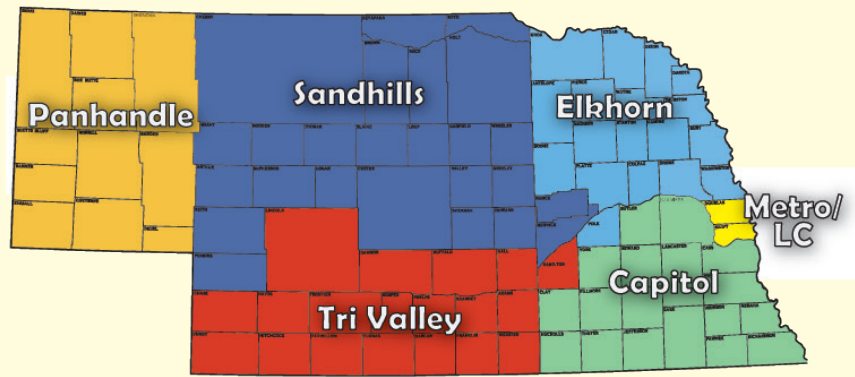
With the start of a new year not far away, it is again time for Nebraska teachers to consider a leadership role in their statewide association.

Beginning on March 21, all NSEA members will be able to vote for candidates to fill nearly three dozen district leadership posts, as well as openings on the NSEA's Board of Directors. If elected, they will assume leadership roles in determining the Association's future.

The window for filing opens on Friday, Jan. 1, and closes Friday, Feb. 5. Voting will take place online, and will begin at 12:01 a.m. on Monday, March 21, and will close at midnight on Monday, April 4.

To file for Association office: Simply go to the NSEA website and click on the '2016 District Elections' link. Select your district, and then select the office you are interested in seeking. All persons seeking to file as a candidate will need their 10-digit NSEA membership identification number. Your number can be found on your NSEA Access membership card; above your name on the mailing label of *The Voice*, or on the email that delivers the digital editions of *The Voice*.

As a step in the online filing process, all candidates will have an opportunity to provide a 50-word statement about their candidacy. Voters will be able to access that statement during balloting. It may be easiest for candidates to type the statement in a Word or other text document before beginning the process, and then paste



the statement into the appropriate box during the filing process.

Note that NSEA's Minority Involvement Plan encourages minorities to seek Association office at all levels. The plan says "It shall be the goal of the Association to seek minority representation on governing and appointive bodies at least equal to the percentage of minority membership for that appropriate level."

If you do not have access to the Internet, mail your name, address, local association name and a 50-word statement to: NSEA Elections, 605 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508-2742. Be sure to state which office you are seeking.

In all cases, the deadline for filing for office is Friday, Feb. 5. The NSEA website is at:

www.nsea.org

THE VACANCIES

A district-by-district (see map) look at leadership opportunities within NSEA:

TRI-VALLEY

- District treasurer;
- Two executive committee seats – both from the West subdistrict.

ELKHORN

- District treasurer;
- District secretary;
- One seat on the NSEA Board of Directors;
- Four seats on the district executive committee.

CAPITOL

- District treasurer;
- District secretary;
- Two seats on the NSEA Board of Directors;
- One seat on the district executive committee.

METRO

- District treasurer;
- District secretary;
- Two seats on the NSEA Board of Directors;
- Five seats on the executive committee (all even-numbered subdistricts).

PANHANDLE

- District president;
- District vice president;
- District secretary;
- One seat on the NSEA Board of Directors;
- Three seats on the district executive committee.

SANDHILLS DISTRICT

- District treasurer;
- District secretary;
- Two executive committee seats.

Needed: Valid E-mail Address

Do you want to vote in the NSEA elections in 2016? All you need is your 10-digit NSEA identification number.

Voting opens at 12:01 a.m. Monday, March 21. Prior to that date, members with valid e-mail addresses on file at NSEA will receive an e-mail detailing the process. The e-mail will include their unique 10-digit identification number.

NSEA members without a valid e-mail address on file will receive a postcard explaining the voting process. If you do not receive either a postcard or an e-mail from NSEA by March 21, call NSEA at 1-800-742-0047.

Update your e-mail address by calling NSEA at 1-800-742-0047, or by filling the form at:

www.nsea.org/contact-us



Higher Ed Academy Voting Dates Set; File by Feb. 5

Members of the NSEA Higher Ed Academy will choose officers in voting that will be held in conjunction with other NSEA elections. However, because Higher Ed members are now integrated into NSEA's six districts, depending on workplace, they will receive two e-mails — one alerting them to NSEA elections and one for Higher Ed Academy elections.

Higher Ed Academy offices that are open for election include a three-year term for an Educational Support Professional representative; and a three-year term for an Academic Professional representative.

To file for one of those offices by the Feb. 5 deadline, go to the NSEA website at:

www.nsea.org

5 Ways to Avoid Manipulation

Multiple Strategies a Critical Component of a Successful Classroom

By Dr. Richard Curwin

This past summer, I wrote a post on things never to say to children. It was fun to write (and, I hope, fun to read). In the comments, many readers recalled hearing or saying some of these forbidden statements. While about 95 percent of the commenters agreed with me, one of my points became a real controversy.

Teachers were only about 60 percent in favor of this point: “I like the way Toby is sitting.”

This is a manipulation to get the class to sit down. Saying this teaches children that manipulation works. It’s better to be direct and tell the truth by saying, “Class, please sit down.” In addition, any student who is never publicly singled out for something positive will resent you. While I used to employ this technique myself, I think the downside far outweighs the good, even if it works.

Both Sides of the Coin

One commenter asked, “What’s wrong with this?”

That’s a wonderful question because it can be asked of everything we do in the classroom. And if we can’t answer it, we shouldn’t use that strategy. Every classroom choice that a teacher makes has both positive and negative outcomes. Classroom decisions are like coins, one side heads, the other side tails. Great teachers know both and choose what to do by weighing both sides.

If your goal is to appreciate a student’s behavior, it’s best done privately. If your goal is affecting the entire class rather than appreciating an individual student, then the good side is that it usually works. The bad side is that it’s manipulative, and further, it teaches students to be manipulators.

You’ve probably heard a student say, “But Mr. Curwin lets us do it.” If you’re a parent, your own child has certainly claimed, “But other parents let their kids do it.” These children are doing the same thing as you when you say, “I like what David is doing.”

Whether or not you use this technique, at least understand both sides and make an informed decision. Lots of things “work,” but at what cost? Think of how much harm has been caused by those who never asked the second part of the question.

Here’s another behavior management principle that I strongly believe: If you take something away, give something back. In other words, it’s not enough to say, “Don’t fight.” Alternatives to fighting are equally necessary. Because my summer post was not about the question we’re discussing today, I had no time to offer other choices. Had I done so, the conversation would have been a lot different.

Offering an Alternative

Here are five practical, non-manipulative strategies for getting your classes ready to work. The negative side is that all of these

take more time. Are those few seconds worth being a non-manipulative teacher? Only you can decide.

These five techniques, effective across all grade levels, are not based on winning the teacher’s regard. Since school is for all children, not just the good ones, students should not need to win or even earn your positive regard. These strategies work mostly by giving control to students.

■ **Student Leaders:** Divide the class into groups of about five. Rotate a group leader each week. Do not use leadership as a reward for good behavior. Doing so will destroy the process.

Each student in each group gets a chance at leadership regardless of his or her behavior. When you want the class ready to pay attention, let the leaders get their groups organized. Before setting this technique up, teach your students how to be good leaders without bullying or ignoring students who don’t listen.

■ **Music No. 1:** Bring in music, a different type each day, and tell your class that the music means get ready to work. Play the music when you need class attention. Allow students to remind nearby students that it’s time to get ready.

■ **Music No. 2:** On a daily rotating basis, let students bring in their favorite music and use it as in Music No. 1.

■ **Leaders of the Pack:** As I discussed in my post *Dogs as Role Models: A Lesson in Classroom Management*, every classroom has student leaders. You don’t choose

these leaders — the other students do. The true classroom leaders aren’t always obvious. The way to find out is to evaluate your classroom atmosphere when a student is absent. If things are the same, that child isn’t a leader. However, if the class changes in that student’s absence, he or she is one of the leaders. Most classes have one or two leaders. Ask them to be your helpers in getting the class ready to work. The most difficult students are typically very good when given a positive responsibility.

■ **Have a class brainstorming session:** Come up with their preferred ways for you to bring the class to order. I’ve seen first-grade kids who have done a great job at this. If your students’ suggestions don’t work, tell them that they need to think of ideas that will work. Students generally want their ideas to work, so they respond more enthusiastically.

Stay Flexible

All strategies lose their power over time. This is a natural phenomenon. If you listen to your favorite song too often, it becomes hard to listen to for a while. When your strategy for bringing order starts to break down, go to another one on your list. Having multiple strategies and the flexibility to rotate them is a critical component of any successful classroom.

Dr. Richard Curwin is the Director of the graduate program in behavior disorder at David Yellin College. This article first appeared at edutopia.org



Retirees: Consider InterGen, Part 13!

Program Matches Retirees to Mentor College Students

Here is a resolution worth keeping in the New Year: I will sign up for and participate in NSEA's Intergenerational Mentoring Project in 2016!

Every NSEA-Retired member should at least consider sharing their knowledge and expertise with teachers-to-be via the NSEA-Retired affiliate's InterGenerational Mentoring Project.

The 13th session of the project pairs NSEA-Retired members with members of the Student Education Association of Nebraska – college students – nearing their student teaching semester. The NSEA-Retired member acts as a mentor to the student member through their student teaching semester and into their first year as a professional teacher, if desired.

The relationship between the mentor and the student is non-judgmental, non-evaluative. The mentor can help the prospective teacher get through tough day-to-day moments and challenges that every student teacher and every first-year teacher will face. Through telephone, e-mail, and face-to-face conversations, the student knows he or she has an experienced mentor to turn to for an idea for a lesson, a hint for handling a discipline problem, or a trusting shoulder to lean on.

Sessions will be held at NSEA headquarters, and begin at 12:30 p.m. Friday, Feb. 12. The program concludes on Saturday at 1:30 p.m. Housing is provided by NSEA, with a gas stipend, depending on location. For details, call Rebecca Smith at 1-800-742-0047. To sign up, go to:

bit.ly/IGMentor2016

Lobby Day is Feb. 2

NSEA-Retired members will gather in Lincoln on Tuesday, Feb. 2, to address legislative concerns and to talk to state senators about those concerns.

Of particular interest to retirees once again at this annual Lobby Day event is the taxation of Social Security benefits.

Lobby Day will start with an issue awareness training to familiarize NSEA-Retired members with bills that are up for consideration during the 2016 session of the Legislature. First-time attendees to Lobby Day will have an orientation session at 8:30 a.m. Registration and training will take place in the fourth floor conference room at NSEA, 605 S. 14th Street, Lincoln. This is the tentative agenda:

8:15 a.m.: Registration and coffee.

8:30 a.m.: First-time lobbyist training (third floor).

9 a.m.: Issue awareness training.

10:15 a.m.: Observe the Unicameral, visit with senators.

Noon: Lunch at NSEA.

Registration will open soon. Watch the NSEA-Retired website at nsea.org/retired, or call Rebecca Smith at 1-800-742-0047. Registration deadline is Friday, Jan. 29.

There is no fee for members. Guests are asked to pay \$10 to cover program costs. NSEA-Retired members who attend are asked to park on the east side of the Trinity Lutheran Church parking lot at 12th and H streets. Do not park in spaces marked "Reserved."

Elections Set for March

Elections for secretary and treasurer of NSEA-Retired, as well as District Directors for Metro, Panhandle, and Tri-Valley Districts, will be held in March 2016. These general officers for NSEA-Retired are all elected for three-year terms that will begin in August 2016.

Delegates to the 2016 NSEA Delegate Assembly and 2016 NEA Representative Assembly will also be selected during the March voting. More information about these elections will be published in the



Conference Highlights: The 30th anniversary celebration of the NSEA-Retired affiliate was held during the organization's fall conference in Grand Island in November. Above, Sen. Mike Gloor and Sen. Curt Friesen speak with attendees at a pre-conference. At right, NSEA-Retired Elkhorn District Director Tom Black, NSEA-Retired President Roger Rea, and NSEA-Retired Corner Editor Renae Kelly display one of three awards for excellence their work received from the National Education Association for work on *The Corner* and the NSEA-Retired newsletter, *The Advocate*.



January 2016 issue of *The Voice*, and will be included in the January issue of NSEA-Retired's newsletter, *The Advocate*.

Please check the NSEA Retired website in January to download and complete nomination forms for these openings.

Local Retired Association News

The final local association to be highlighted is the Omaha Education Association-Retired affiliate. The OEA-Retired affiliate has 819 members. Dues are \$10 per year or \$100 for a lifetime membership.

Meetings are held at the Omaha Education Association, 4202 South 57th St. in Omaha, beginning at 9:30 a.m. Each gathering will start with a business meeting, followed by speakers who are experts in their field, and then a Q&A. Cookies and coffee will be served. The schedule includes a Dec. 3 meeting with Pat O'Malley talking about taxes; a March 17 meeting, looking at wills, long-term care and finances; and a May 12 meeting discussing travel.

Issues of concern for members include taxes, Social Security, retirement security, insurance and the needs of today's teachers.

Leaders are President Cheryl Richardson (402-334-7715); Vice President Walta Sue Dodd (402-733-4155); Secretary-Treasurer Dee Rankin (402-572-7282). Their e-mails, respectively, are:

cheryl.richardson@cox.net
wsdodd@aol.com
51631INS@cox.net

At-large board members are Richard Hood (402-556-3408); Sharon Hayenga (402-339-5764); Ruby Davis (402-571-4795); and Scott McGinty (402-493-1825). The bookkeeper is Roger Rea (402-330-6870). The OEA-Retired website is at:

oearetired.org/

— Renae Kelly, Editor
renaekelly@gmail.com

Kimball's Weisbrook Authors Book on Alzheimer's

Idea for 'Remember Me...' Came from Weisbrook's Mother

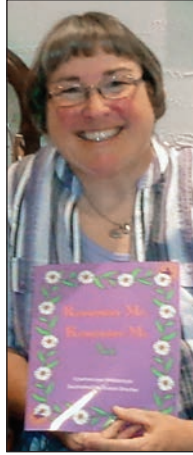
Carma Lee Weisbrook is a teacher, a member of the Kimball Education Association and now an author.

Weisbrook has taught at Kimball's Mary Lynch Elementary School for the past 18 years, and in Nebraska for 33 years. A Nebraska farm girl, she says her family and extended family instilled in her a faith in God, love of family, and hard work.

Weisbrook has authored *Remember Me...Remember Me Not*, a picture book written specifically to give comfort and help to those with loved ones afflicted with Alzheimer's disease.

"My goal is for the book to help children understand this awful disease," said

The book follows young Jodi, who loves her grandma



Weisbrook

very much and loves to spend time with her Grandma, gardening and talking about everything under the sun. That continues until Grandma starts acting strangely and begins to forget things. Family members take Grandma to a doctor, where she is diagnosed with symptoms of Alzheimer's.

Weisbrook's touching story shows how Jodi is deeply affected, but still able to cope and live with her Grandma's situation.

Weisbrook earned a degree in elementary education, and enjoys writing stories and poems about her family. The idea for *Remember Me...Remember Me Not* came from her mother, who had Alzheimer's. Weisbrook resides on a farm with her husband, Duane. They have two grown sons, a daughter-in-law, and a grandson.

Learn more, or order a copy, at:

<http://www.remembertheblessings.com/>

Four Nebraska Schools Earn 'Blue Ribbon' Title

Arapahoe, Bancroft-Rosalie, DC West, Norfolk Schools Honored

Based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student groups, four Nebraska schools have been named 2015 National Blue Ribbon Schools.

Among 335 schools nationwide recognized by the U.S. Department of Education were:

- **Arapahoe Elementary School, in Arapahoe**, where a comprehensive effort to lift reading scores rippled upward into the junior high level; continuing assessment of instruction and learning results in evolving strategies; and the school building is widely recognized as the most important building in the community.

- **Bancroft-Rosalie Elementary School, Bancroft**, where staff is highly collaborative and plans strategically to accommodate struggling students; extended learning opportunities are provided for students; and jumpstart summer school is held for at-risk students each year. Grades K-3 have a 90 minute reading block and grades 4-6 have 70 minutes of reading each day. Strides in accelerating math, science and social studies have also been made.

- **Douglas County West Elementary School, Valley**, where proficient readers are created using various approaches to engage all students in literacy; where a start-of-the-year math assessment allows teachers to identify and assist students who lag, with repeated opportunities for students to gain conceptual understandings.

- **Washington Elementary School, Norfolk**, where Professional Learning Communities embrace collaboration, problem solving and data to focus on increasing student achievement. In order to pinpoint methods that best serve students, the school staff has implemented a Student Assistance Team (SAT) day each month. Teachers, parents, support staff and others form a plan to assist individual students.

The Department honored the schools in November in Washington, D.C. The National Blue Ribbon Schools Program honors schools where students either achieve very high learning standards or are making notable improvements in closing the achievement gap.

The Department invites National Blue Ribbon School nominations from the top education official in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, the Department of Defense Education Activity and the Bureau of Indian Education.

For details, go to: www.ed.gov/nationalblueribbonschools



Belz

Lynch

Krause

Belz-Lynch-Krause Stipends Awarded for Local, Staff Development Projects

Good teachers are always looking for ways to improve their skill set. NSEA makes learning easier with an award from the Belz-Lynch-Krause Educational Grant Fund. The 2016 application deadline for those funds is Saturday, Feb. 6.

Belz-Lynch-Krause dollars are given for projects related to improving a local association; development of instructional materials; or for staff development for members of a local association. Eligible are any NSEA member; group of NSEA members; or any NSEA local association.

The application must include an abstract, not to exceed four typed pages, including details on: need; how the project will address the need to relate to professional growth goals; project description; timeline; a budget statement; and method of evaluating the project.

Applications must be postmarked by Saturday, Feb. 6. Recipients will be notified by the end of March. A letter describing and evaluating the project shall be submitted to the NSEA Scholarship and Grants Committee within three months of project completion.

The grants are named for John Lynch, NSEA's executive director from 1959 to 1974; Paul Belz, executive director from 1974-84; and Helen Krause, 1966 NSEA president, and the first Nebraskan to serve on NEA's Executive Committee.

For more, visit the link on the NSEA home page. An application form will be posted through Saturday, Feb. 6. The website is at:

www.nsea.org

More details are also available from Sally Bodtke at 1-800-742-0047 or via e-mail at:

sally.bodtke@nsea.org

Apply Now for CalCas Cash

High Schools Can Earn Grants for Athletics

Public high schools across the nation can score up to \$3,000 for their sports departments with a California Casualty Thomas R. Brown Athletics Grant.

California Casualty, provider of the NEA Auto & Home Insurance Program, provides \$100,000 to offset budget cuts that have affected high school athletics.

Last year, 87 high schools in 29 states received grants totaling \$100,200. Since its inception, more than \$400,000 has been awarded to purchase safer football helmets, update tattered and torn uniforms or replace deteriorated wrestling and gymnastics mats.

Applicants must be a current member of the National Education Association and one of the NEA state affiliates, as well as be an active employee of the public high school for which funding is sought. Award recipients will be notified in April, with presentations in May.

Applications must be received by Jan. 15, 2016. Details, rules and entry forms can be found at:

www.calcasathleticsgrant.com

Speaking of Teaching

"I strongly believe in the benefits of competition and free enterprise. But schools are not businesses and students are neither products nor consumers."

— Owen Butler,
former chair of
Procter & Gamble

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



NSEA at NETA!

NSEA's outreach effort this year included a booth at the Nebraska Educational Technology Association meeting in Kearney recently. NSEA members Andy Ohlson, left, Axtell, and wife Calena Ohlson, Holdrege, stopped at the booth to visit with NSEA Organizational Specialist Cindy Copich.

Kids Respond to Newspaper Hunts

Submitted by Sara Graham, a language arts teacher at West High School in Waterloo, Iowa.

"I do newspaper hunts with the students on Fridays. I get an earlier edition of the paper and compose 10-12 questions for them to answer. It's easy to level the questions based on the skills of your students. The students first have to figure out what the question wants to know, then where to look for it, and finally read the article/ad/comic to find the meaning.

"This exercise is great for finding the main idea and supporting details, evaluating credibility, and practicing reading skills in general. The comic strips are useful for inferences.



Sports pages are great for doing math-based questions or figurative language skills. These newspaper hunts generally take the whole class period.

"My kids always respond well to these newspaper activities. It becomes a bit of a competition to see what group can figure them out first and get the most correct answers. They rework answers that they miss. Any extra time is spent reading the newspaper articles that we didn't cover in the newspaper hunt. After doing these hunts for a while, they start to write their own questions and challenge their classmates."

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