

THE

VOICE



The Nebraska State Education Association ❖ November 2014

BELLEVUE EAST

**BELLEVUE TEACHER
WATCHES BUDGET**

**TO THE
PENNY**

*NSEA survey of second-year teachers
confirms the financial struggle is real.*

Upcoming Assignments

General Election

Tuesday, Nov. 4

■ **What:** Nebraska's General Election. Citizens will cast ballots in local school board elections, for nearly two dozen state senators, state constitutional offices and governor.

■ **Details:** Be informed by reading about NSEA's candidate recommendations starting on Page 18, and then don't forget to vote on Tuesday, Nov. 4.



American Education Week

Nov. 17-21

■ **What:** It has been nearly 100 years since the National Education Association led the effort to recognize educators with AEW.

■ **Details:** Learn more under the 'Grants & Events' tab at: nea.org

Legislature Convenes

Jan. 7

■ **What:** The new session of the Legislature – with a new cast of senators and first-term governor — opens on this day.

■ **Details:** Watch for the December and January issues of The Voice.

AEW is Ahead!

Raise Your Hand for Student Success

Access to a great public school is a basic right for every child, but that access is not readily available unless we all work toward that goal. Great public schools are the responsibility of every American, thus the theme for American Education Week 2014: Raise Your Hand for Student Success.

With those obligations and responsibilities, it is only right that we observe the 93rd American Education Week — scheduled for Nov. 17-21 this year – to celebrate public education and honor individuals who are making a difference in ensuring that every child receives a quality education. The week-long celebration features a special observance each day of the week:

■ **Monday, Nov. 17** – Nationwide Kickoff: Across the country, schools will celebrate excellence in education by hosting kickoff events and activities.

■ **Tuesday, Nov. 18** – Parents Day: Schools will invite parents into the classroom for a firsthand look at what the school day is like for their children.

■ **Wednesday, Nov. 19** – Education Support Professionals Day: ESPs keep schools running and students safe, healthy and ready to learn.

■ **Thursday, Nov. 20** – Educator for a Day: On this day, community leaders

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

■ **Friday, Nov. 21** – Substitute Educators Day: Substitute educators play a vital role in the maintenance and continuity of daily education.

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

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

The conventions of both organizations subsequently adopted resolutions of support for a national effort to raise public awareness of the importance of education. In 1921, the NEA Representative Assembly in Des Moines called for designation of one week each year to spotlight education. The first observance of American Education Week occurred December 4-10, 1921, with the NEA and American Legion as cosponsors. A year later, the then U.S. Office of Education joined the effort as a cosponsor, and the PTA followed in 1938.

For details and resources, go to: www.nea.org/grants/19823



Cover Story:

It's an age-old story, but young teachers are struggling financially, with some facing astronomical student loan debt. Bellevue East teacher Nathan Bacon's budget-conscious family has about \$74 left at month's end. For details, turn to

Page 10



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And the Survey Says...



**NSEA President
Nancy Fulton**

“

*...the polling
reaffirmed what
we've known
for years: voters
trust teachers.*

”

Is NSEA a professional organization or a labor union? Or is it both?

Depending on where I travel across the state, what group of individuals I talk to, or the interests of the audience, the emphasis may be different.

Those who join NSEA as a professional organization may have different reasons or goals than those joining as a union. Ultimately, it depends on what the member wants from this great organization.

What better place to define the difference than Wikipedia, which says “A professional organization is usually a nonprofit organization seeking to further a particular profession, the interests engaged in that profession and the public interest.”

We need to go no further than our own mission statement to show that NSEA fits the Wikipedia definition of professional association. Our stated mission says NSEA “is to advocate for all education professionals, empowering them to provide an excellent public school education for every student.” We are also a non-profit working to promote education and the interests our members have in valuing equal access to a quality education; valuing diversity in our classrooms; promoting school and community partnerships, and valuing the expertise of all education professionals.

Fits the Definition

In analyzing the similarities and differences and between professional organizations and unions, Haug and Sussman found that professionalization and unionization are two processes by which members of a certain occupation seek to achieve collective upward mobility. Both professional and union options can provide opportunities for organized members of a profession to apply stronger collective pressure for upward mobility than a single individual could on his or her own.

In that regard, NSEA fits the union definition.

Labor unions represent workers with activity centering on collective bargaining for wages, benefits and working conditions. Lobbying activities are another typical union activity, and NSEA does regularly lobby elected officials and policymakers on issues of benefit to public education. NSEA also campaigns for higher professional standards for educators and support professionals, and files legal

actions to protect the rights of school employees. We also make recommendations to our members based on our collective interest – education – in every election cycle.

Essentially, NSEA is both professional association and union, drawing from the best of both worlds for the ultimate benefit of our members.

Survey Discord

Regarding those election recommendations: they come from you, our members, and, in fact, carry substantial clout. The public considers educators’ opinions as informed and reliable. A recent poll of Nebraska voters is a case in point.

A Nebraska survey conducted in September included a question designed to determine what groups or persons might best sway voters on the minimum wage ballot issue, Initiative 425 issue. The question gauged whether voters might be more or less likely to support the issue if, for instance, the Omaha World-Herald, a business group, or a well-known individual came out in favor. Pollsters also sought to ask whether NSEA’s support of Initiative 425 would sway a voter’s decision.

There was, however, some discord over the exact wording of that question, and the final version never used our Association’s name. Frankly, it was worded in such a way as to potentially skew the results: “Would you be more likely to support the measure if the school teacher’s union came out in favor of the measure?”

The final poll results were revealing. Even using “teacher’s union” instead of Nebraska State Education Association, the polling reaffirmed what we’ve known for years: voters trust teachers. Indeed, the influence of your Association – the “teacher’s union” as the poll stated – garnered the highest level of influence among all groups tested. In fact, 44 percent of voters said they would be more likely to favor the ballot issue if it carried the recommendation of the “teacher’s union” – your professional organization. That put NSEA ahead of Warren Buffett (43 percent) and the leading business organization in Omaha (42 percent).

Be assured: your opinion, your voice, is trusted and valued, whether you belong to your professional association or your union.



Finding Nebraska’s Great Public Schools (GPS)

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

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| BellevuePage 10 | Bennington.....Page 9 | Keya PahaPage 9 | Papillion-LaVistaPage 9 |
| | ElkhornPage 9 | LincolnPage 22 | South Sioux CityPage 16 |
| | FremontPage 16 | Loup CountyPage 23 | University of Nebraska-OmahaPage 18 |
| | Grace University.....Page 18 | Omaha.....Page 22 | West PointPage 22 |

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Children's Fund Now @ 20 Years

If There is a Child in Need, Children's Fund Can Help

Twenty years ago, a few NSEA employees saw a need and came up with a plan.

The need: Thousands of Nebraska schoolchildren go to school each year in need of a good meal, a warm coat, eyeglasses or another basic necessity that circumstances force them to do without.

The Plan: To help as many of those students as possible acquire those necessities, assisting them to be prepared for school. After all, it is difficult to learn if you can't clearly see the teacher at the front of the room, or if a toothache compromises your concentration.

Thus, the Children's Fund was born. The 'thank you' notes have been rolling in since. This note came in recently:

"I wanted to take this opportunity to shout THANK YOU to the Children's Fund. The fund was able to provide immediate assistance to a family of five students in need. These students are now able to bundle up as the weather gets colder. They know first-hand that people care – and that is truly remarkable."



That is where the NSEA Children's Fund works: helping children in need.

For 20 years, with no fanfare, thousands of Nebraska children have received help in the form of an anonymous purchase of necessities on their behalf. The fund was created because teachers often use their own dollars to help a child in need, knowing they can't help every child. For that reason, the Children's Fund came into being.

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

Contributions come from teachers, businesses and fundraisers across the state, and it's important to know that every penny goes to help children.

For funding to help a student, there is no red tape, no form to fill out. An NSEA member simply needs to contact the NSEA at 1-800-742-0047 and ask for Sally Bodtke. Or e-mail her at:

sally.bodtke@nsea.org

NSEA Card Goes Electronic

Downloading Your Card is Easy at nsea.org

By now, you should have received your NSEA membership card in your email.

The card's new format has not diminished the savings. In fact, if anything, the card is worth even more this year than last. That's because the Access program continually works to add vendors and benefits to the card program. So whether you're searching for a meal deal, a hotel stay or retail shopping discounts, check the value of your NSEA membership card at www.nsea.org.

If you have not previously done so, activate your card today using one of these simple steps:

- Visit www.nsea.org and click on the



image of the card in the lower left-hand corner of the screen to open the Access savings page. Click on "Register" at the top of the page, and enter your personal 10-digit member number found on your card. Start saving!

- Call 1-888-313-6591 to speak with an Access representative.

You can download and print a copy of the electronic card on the NSEA website at:

www.nsea.org/mycard

You can also download NSEA's 'My Deal' mobile application, allowing you to use the money-saving Access program on your cell phone. For details, go to:

<http://bit.ly/NSEAMyDeals>

Middle Class Status Difficult to Attain for Mid-Career Teachers

Study Says Salaries Aren't Keeping Pace

A new report on teacher pay says one in five Nebraska teachers must work at least one second job to make ends meet

NSEA's own survey shows the numbers are much higher for teachers early in their careers.

The report by the nonprofit Center for American Progress says teacher salaries in some states are "painfully low" – so low, in fact, that truck drivers and sheet-metal workers earn more than do mid- and late-career teachers.

The report, "Mid- and Late-Career Teachers Struggle With Paltry Incomes" says base salaries for veteran teachers in some states are so low that:

- In Colorado, teachers with a graduate degree and 10 years experience make less than a truck driver in the state.
- In Oklahoma, teachers with 15 years of experience and a master's make less than sheet metal workers.

- Georgia educators with 10 years experience and graduate degree make less than a flight attendant in the state.

The study found that in Nebraska, at least 21 percent of teachers work a second job (a story on page 10 reveals the number may be closer to 63 percent among young Nebraska teachers).

Further, the report found that the U.S. ranked 19th among 27 industrialized countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in terms of elementary teacher salary growth over the past 15 years. The average elementary school teacher salary among those countries had grown 35 percent in 15 years; in the U.S., growth was at 23 percent. Japan (75 percent), Korea (74 percent) and Ireland (65 percent) lead all countries.

The bottom line, said the report, is that mid- and late-career teachers are not earning what they deserve, nor are they able to gain the salaries that support a middle-class existence.

For details, search for 'paltry' on the Center's website at:

www.americanprogress.org

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It's Hassebrook!

Hope is On the Line in This Election

In January, Nebraskans will have a new governor. Will he be an education friendly governor, or will he be a governor who seeks radical change to a system that consistently puts out top-notch, near-best-in-the-nation graduating classes each and every year?

Colleagues of yours who interviewed the two candidates will tell you that those are the choices.

Chuck Hassebrook has a dedicated and stellar record of 18 years on the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. He supports investment in existing public schools, and his top priority is investment in early childhood education, where study after study has shown that early investment pays off with fewer social costs as those children reach adulthood.

"My Number One priority as governor will be to expand preschool and other early childhood education programs," Hassebrook said. "I believe it is the best long term investment we can make in the future of our state.

"We can make our state stronger by investing in children, families, and economic development. In recent years we have short-changed those investments, which has reduced productivity and led to increased long-term costs for foster care, public assistance, and prisons."

There is hope for the future with that kind of candidate in the Governor's Mansion.

Salary Plan, Retirement Risk

On the other hand is Pete Ricketts, a good family man with a completely opposite view of public education.

Ricketts favors spending public money on private and corporate schools. Charter school schemes – with a history of questionable outcomes elsewhere – are OK in Nebraska, says Ricketts.

The stable and sound structure of your salary and retirement benefits could be at risk with a Ricketts governorship. When NSEA asked Ricketts what he would do to improve teacher compensation in order to attract and retain well-qualified teaching staff in Nebraska, Ricketts said "I would consider alternative structures of payment for teachers."

When NSEA asked whether he supports providing a defined benefit retirement plan for school employees, such as school employees now enjoy, Ricketts said "To ensure long-term stability of the program, alternatives to strengthen the system should be explored."

What, exactly, do those responses reveal about the Ricketts plan for your salary and benefits? In terms of retirement, it likely means a push to convert your retirement plan to a less-stable and less-robust defined contribution plan.

Finally, while Hassebrook is a strong supporter of the hope, promise and results of early childhood education, Ricketts has shown little to no enthusiasm for any kind of public early childhood programs.

Hope for Early Childhood Ed?

Asked by NSEA whether he would support funding to establish all day, every day kindergarten programs across the state, Ricketts said simply, "I believe deployment of education funding should remain a function of local school boards."

Asked about his support for early childhood education, Ricketts answered with "provided that it is consistent with local control and other budget priorities are considered in the process."

What would Nebraska public education look like after one term, or



Hassebrook

AN ELECTION PRIMER

The Candidates: You Decide

NSEA makes recommendations based on each candidate's stance on public education. And every candidate on these pages will make decisions that will affect your job, your students and your school district.

In each case, candidates listed here and on Page 24 completed education-specific questionnaires and were then interviewed face-to-face by local, bipartisan teams of your Association colleagues. Those teams then selected the candidate that best exemplified a pro-public education stance.

Whatever your decision, please remember to vote on Nov. 4.

perhaps two terms, of a Ricketts governorship? Would there be any hope for early childhood education? For the long-term investment in our children and our future?

One County, One School

Those thoughts don't even get to the fact that Ricketts founded and chaired, until last year, the Platte Institute, which under his leadership called for school district consolidation down to the one-district-one-county level. Or that the Platte Institute called for cutting state aid to the university system and raising tuition to make up the lost revenue.

Chuck Hassebrook, on the other hand, sees every penny spent on education as an investment in the future. As a member of the University of Nebraska Board of Regents, Hassebrook worked to keep tuition down, led the charge to provide millions in aid to low- to middle-income college students and has advocated strongly for local control of school districts – not mass, state-mandated school consolidation.

Clearly, when it comes to education, Chuck Hassebrook is the right person to lead Nebraska for the next four years.

See a Complete List of NSEA Recommended Candidates on Page 24

SPRING COURSES | 2015

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UNK UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA KEARNEY

| | | | | | |
|--------------|--|--------------|---|--------------|--|
| ART 803-01 | Art Education Research Methods | EDAD 842P-01 | Administration of Special Education | SPAN 808P-02 | Comparative Grammar |
| ART 807P-01 | Art Methods for Young Children | EDAD 848 | Curriculum Planning (2 sections) | SPAN 870P-01 | Seminar in Spanish/Latin American Studies: The Inconstant Border |
| ART 844-01 | History, Theories & Philosophies of Art Education | EDAD 853-01 | School Business Management | SPCH 851P-01 | Leadership Communication |
| ART 845-02 | Multicultural Art in the Elementary & Secondary Curriculum | EDAD 854-01 | Introduction to Educational Administration | TE 800 | Educational Research (2 sections) |
| ART 846-01 | Seminar in Art Education | EDAD 859-01 | Legal Basis of Education | TE 803 | Philosophy of Education (2 sections) |
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| BIOL 804-01 | Evolution of Epidemics | EDAD 899P-01 | ST: Athletic Director | TE 831P-01 | Professional Skills & Knowledge I |
| BIOL 811-01 | Scientific Illustration | EDAD 940-01 | Administrative Theory | TE 832-01 | Professional Skills & Knowledge II |
| BIOL 820-02 | Introduction to Graduate Study | EDAD 944-01 | Seminar in Educational Administration | TE 833-01 | Context of Education |
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| BIOL 827-01 | Biological Statistics | ENG 899-01 | ST: Teaching Writing in Secondary School | TE 835P-01 | Transitional Student Teaching II |
| BIOL 830P-01 | ST: Cell Structure & Function | FORL 870P-01 | TESOL | TE 836P-01 | Post-Baccalaureate Student Teaching |
| BIOL 830P-02 | ST: Invertebrate Behavior | FSID 886P-01 | Families In Crisis | TE 845-01 | Contemporary Theory & Practice in Reading |
| BIOL 830P-03 | ST: Flowering Plants: Systematics & Evolution | HIST 801 | America Interpreted (3 sections) | TE 846-01 | Diagnosis/Correction of Reading Difficulties |
| BIOL 830P-04 | ST: Desert Biology | HIST 803 | Historical Methods (2 sections) | TE 852-01 | Issues & Trends in Early Childhood Education |
| BIOL 831A-01 | Biological Research: Hypothesis & Justification | HIST 848-01 | ST: Great Depression | TE 853C-01 | Improvement of Instruction in Elementary School Language Arts |
| BIOL 831B-01 | Biological Research: Methodology | HIST 848-02 | ST: Public History | TE 854-01 | Reading in the Content Areas |
| BIOL 831C-01 | Biological Research: Annotated Bibliography | HIST 848-03 | ST: U.S. in Cold War Era | TE 866-01 | Motivating the 21st Century Learner |
| BIOL 831D-01 | Biological Research: Data Collection | HIST 848-04 | ST: Gilded Age | TE 869-01 | Introduction to School Library Program |
| BIOL 831E-01 | Biological Research: Statistical Analysis | HIST 848-05 | ST: Progressive Era | TE 870-01 | Developing Web-Based Portfolios |
| BIOL 831F-01 | Biological Research: Manuscript | HIST 848-06 | ST: Digital History | TE 871-01 | Collection Development & Management |
| BIOL 834-01 | Conservation Biology | HIST 848-07 | ST: American West | TE 874-01 | Production of Instructional Resources |
| BIOL 839-01 | Human Physiological Systems | HIST 849-01 | ST: Wars of Religion | TE 880-01 | Management of Educational Technology |
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| BIOL 881 | Current Issues in Biology (3 sections) | MUS 802P-01 | Music History & Theory Review | TESE 862-01 | Formal & Informal Assessment in Special Education |
| BIOL 886-01 | Sexual Selection | MUS 820P-01 | String Pedagogy | TESE 863-01 | Research Based Instructional Strategies for Students with Disabilities |
| CHEM 820-01 | Inorganic Chemistry for High School Teachers | MUS 897-01 | Graduate Capstone Project | TESE 867-01 | Functional Behavior Assessment & Behavior Intervention Planning |
| CSIT 828P-01 | Data Communication & Distributed Processing | MUS 899P-01 | ST: Choral Literature | TESE 875P-01 | Preparing Adolescents for the Post-Secondary World |
| CSIT 850P-01 | E-Commerce Information Systems | PE 841P-01 | Physical Education for Elementary Schools | TESE 879P-01 | Teaching Social Skills to Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder |
| CSIT 858P-01 | Computer Security | PE 854-01 | Leisure Behavior | VOED 899-01 | Special Problems/Topics in Vocational Education |
| CSP 804P-01 | Counseling & Mental Disorders | PE 872-01 | Physical Education for Students with Developmental Disabilities | | |
| CSP 875-01 | Career & Lifestyle Development | SFED 310-01 | Driving Task Analysis | | |
| CSP 960-01 | Globalization of School Psychology | SFED 430-01 | Developing Driver Education Classroom Skills | | |
| CSP 991-01 | Scholarly Study | SFED 431-01 | Developing Driver Education Vehicle Skills | | |
| | | SFED 431-02 | Developing Driver Education Vehicle Skills Lab | | |

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- Spanish Education
- Driver Education
- Music Education
- Special Education

The Faces of Advocacy

For years, NSEA has hosted an annual Advocacy Conference over a Friday evening and Saturday, on a single weekend at one site. This year, NSEA spread the love around the state and traveled to nine sites with remarkable results. More than 340 local association negotiators attended the sessions to get updates on bargaining laws, ask questions and get briefed on new procedures around bargaining. The folks on this page go to the table and bargain for your salaries and benefits. Give them a pat on the back!



The Bennington Bunch: At the Omaha meeting were Bennington's negotiations team. From left are Denise Klaus, Dawn Kucera and Emily Kiger.



Across the table: They'll be on the same side of the table once bargaining begins. At the Valentine site, Rose Rowan, left, and Brenda Franklin will represent members of the Keya Paha Education Association.

About those comp studies...: At the Omaha site, Papillion-LaVista Education Association's Dave Herbener tells bargainers that "The people who can do these comp studies are at NSEA. If you have a chance to do the training, do it. It's worth it."

From Elkhorn: At the Omaha location of NSEA's Advocacy Conference were these Elkhorn Education Association negotiators: From left, Becky Torrens, Barb Swarhout, Jessica Pitrowski, Carla Rohwer and Jim Specht. Not pictured are Mike Berck and Brandon Hultman.





Pinching the pennies: Bellevue East High School special education teacher Nathan Bacon knows well the financial struggles faced by young teachers.

To the Last \$74

NSEA Survey Illustrates Financial Challenges Young Teachers Face

As he gets into the rhythm of his second year of teaching, Nathan Bacon and wife Danielle have learned to count pennies. About one-third of their income goes to housing, another 13 percent or so to student loans and the rest to automobile payments, gasoline, utilities, food and other expenses.

In a good month, they have \$74 left for discretionary spending. The July arrival of daughter Nevaeh further focused their budget-watching. Her childcare alone is \$150 a week.

Their bills roughly mirror those of Nebraska teachers in their second year in teaching. A survey of such NSEA members finds many struggling for sound financial footing. Though that is an age-old story for young educators, growing student loan debt – some at staggering levels – puts added burden on today’s young teachers. NSEA’s survey found:

- Second-year teachers spend 29 percent of their income on housing.
- Respondents spend an average of 12.9 percent of their paycheck on student loan debt, their second-highest expense.
- Nearly two-thirds (62.9 percent) have student loan debt of \$15,000 or more. More than half (52.6 percent) owe at least \$20,000. One owes \$175,000; another \$136,000.
- Seven in 10 work at least one part-time job.
- Already, 12.4 percent have considered leaving teaching.

Said one teacher: “I work between 60-70 hours per week and don’t receive adequate compensation for my time and ef-

forts.”

The survey provides insight for negotiators – and state policymakers – as contract talks begin in November.

Bacon’s parents teach, and he was “surrounded by teaching” as a child.

“I was always around the highs and lows, those times when there was not much left over and my parents had to really budget,” he said. “But I liked that they helped their students and pushed them to succeed.”

That childhood put him on a path to teach special education in Bellevue, where he averages 55 hours a week teaching, prepping lesson plans and updating IEPs.

“It is definitely not an 8-to-4 job,” he said.

“It would be nice if that was the case, but you wouldn’t be an effective teacher if you did that.”

Coaching basketball and track adds three hours a day to his workload in those seasons, making his time as tightly-budgeted as his finances. He adds another hour weekly as National Honor Society advisor. Those duties boost his income, but it is still a struggle, since student loans don’t allow much budget “wiggle room.” In a good month, said Bacon, “we have \$74 left, what we consider ‘disposable’ income.”

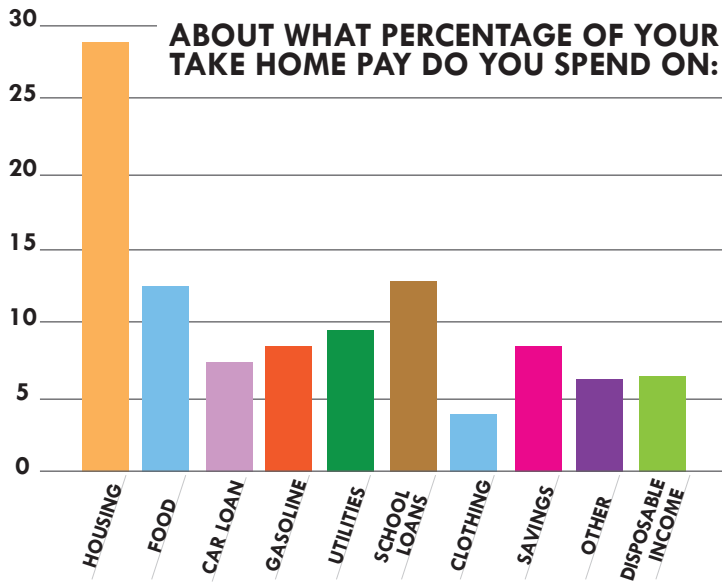
One trip to central Nebraska to visit family eats up that \$74.

Through tight budgeting and daunting student loans, Bacon is in the profession for the long haul – unlike those already considering leaving for greener, perhaps less stressful, pastures.

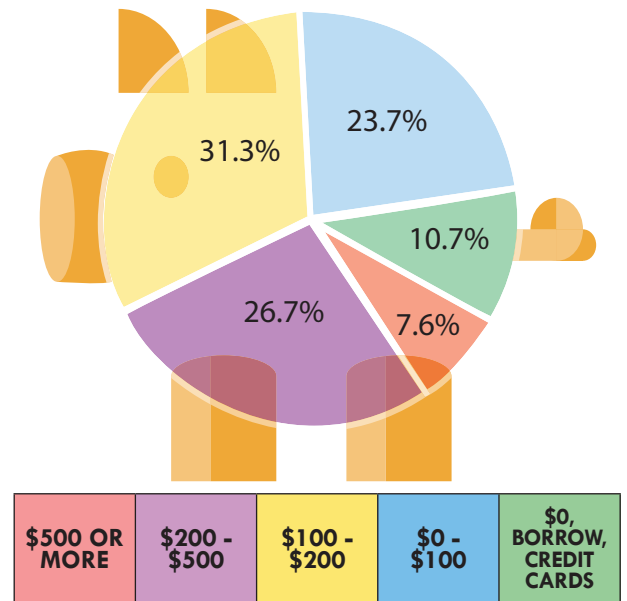
“Right now, the plan is the education field for life,” he said.

NSEA surveyed more than 600 members who completed their first year of teaching in the 2013-14 school year. Survey results are on page 11.

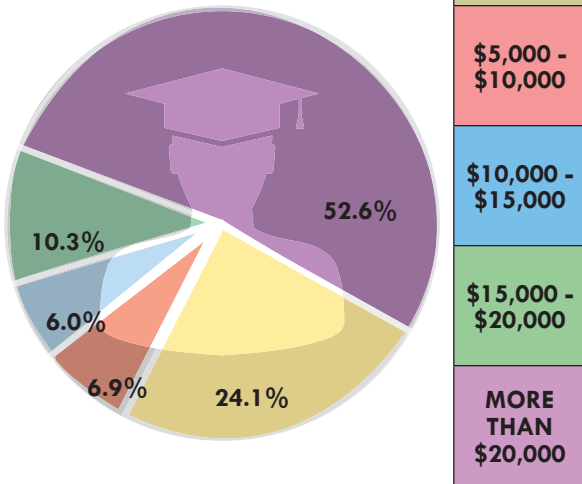
SO WE ASKED...



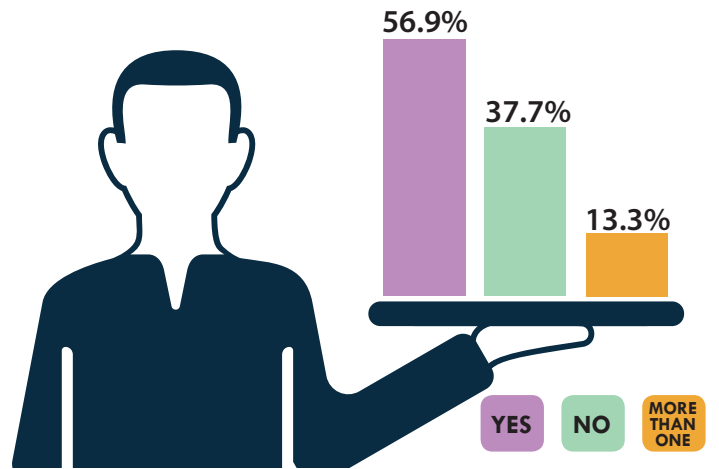
HOW MUCH DISPOSABLE INCOME DO YOU HAVE AFTER PAYING YOUR BILLS?



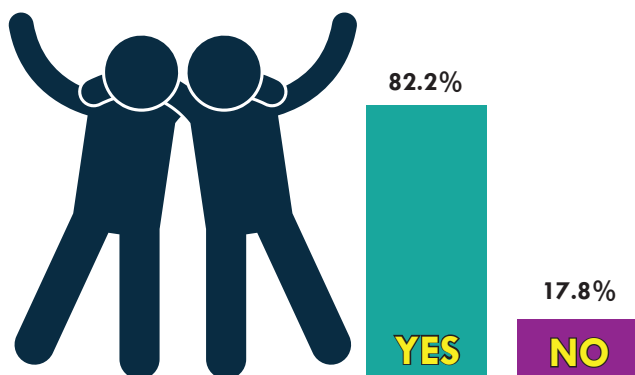
WHAT WAS THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF YOUR COLLEGE LOAN DEBT UPON GRADUATION?



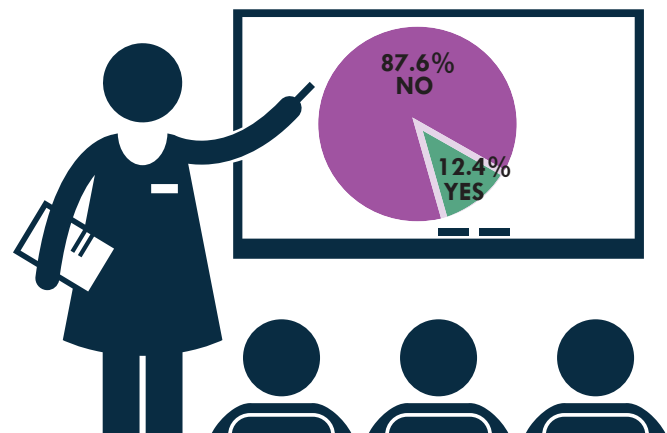
DO YOU HAVE SUMMER OR PART-TIME JOBS TO HELP BALANCE YOUR BUDGET?



AS A FIRST-YEAR TEACHER, DID YOU HAVE A MENTOR?



ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT LEAVING THE TEACHING PROFESSION IN THE NEAR FUTURE?



Nebraska Teacher Salary Update

Yearly Update Provides Details for Policymakers, Negotiators

Once again, Nebraska teachers have made modest gains in the national teacher salary rankings, but those gains have done little to get teachers ahead financially.

Nebraska educators moved from 34th to 33rd in the annual NEA Rankings & Estimates, passing Texas teachers who plummeted from 32nd to 35th.

According to NEA, the average teacher salary in Nebraska in 2012-13 was \$48,997, an increase of \$843 over the previous year. That \$843, however, equates to about \$70 a month, or \$17.50 a week. That is less than 44 cents an hour over a 40-hour week – if you can find a teacher who works just 40 hours a week.

According to InflationData.com, the monthly U.S. inflation rate for the 2012-13 school year ranged from 1.06 percent to 2.16 percent, which means that 1.7 percent salary increase did little to help Nebraska educators get ahead.

Nebraska teachers remain behind counterparts in Wyoming, Colorado and Iowa. While providing a Top 10-in-the-nation crop of high school grads each year, Nebraska teachers also trail the national average salary. Wyoming teachers earn an average of \$56,775 each year, nearly \$7,800 more than a Nebraska teacher. Iowa teachers average \$50,946 and Colorado teachers average \$49,844.

The U.S. average was \$56,103 – \$7,100 more than the Nebraska average.

Kansas Plummet

Nebraska’s average salary has bypassed those in Kansas and Missouri in recent years, and Kansas continues to plummet. The Jayhawk state ranked 37th in 2008-09, but has slipped to 42nd. For the second year, South Dakota educators are last in the rankings, with an average salary of \$39,018 – just a \$200 increase from the previous year. Nebraska’s rise comes from hard work.

“Those who engage in the negotiations process in our local associations have worked hard – very hard – in recent years,” said NSEA President Nancy Fulton. “They’ve dealt with broad changes to the bargaining statutes and other issues, and still managed to improve the well-being and standing of Nebraska teachers.”

She also gave kudos to NSEA’s staff in the areas of advocacy and research, as well as to the day-to-day, on-the-ground work of the Association’s field staff. NSEA’s single, two-day Advocacy Conference of the past was replaced this year by a series of nine smaller conferences around the state. Combined attendance at the nine sites doubled attendance at any previous Advocacy Conference.

Contract talks – these for the 2015-16 school year – begin on Nov. 1.

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

Dual Purpose

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

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

These numbers also provide benchmarks, and allow negotiators, in particular, to set goals based on competitive — and not just comparable or average — measurements. Questions? Reach NSEA’s Larry Scherer or Al Koontz at:

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



| | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 15 | WYOMING | \$56,755 |
| U.S. AVERAGE | | \$56,103 |
| 25 | IOWA | \$50,946 |
| 30 | COLORADO | \$49,844 |
| 33 | NEBRASKA | \$48,997 |
| 41 | MISSOURI | \$47,517 |
| 42 | KANSAS | \$47,464 |
| 51 | S. DAKOTA | \$39,018 |



| TOP 25 | | |
|---|----------|--|
| LINCOLN | \$40,643 | |
| WALTHILL | \$36,868 | |
| OMAHA | \$36,349 | |
| WINNEBAGO | \$36,331 | |
| MILLARD | \$36,275 | |
| HOMER | \$35,750 | |
| WESTSIDE | \$35,700 | |
| BLAIR | \$35,640 | |
| UMO ^N HO ^N NATION | \$35,600 | |
| ESU 02-FREMONT | \$35,459 | |
| ESU 05-BEATRICE | \$35,233 | |
| HOLDREGE | \$35,207 | |
| COLUMBUS | \$35,000 | |
| ELKHORN VALLEY | \$34,992 | |
| ASHLAND-GREENWOOD | \$34,938 | |
| HARVARD | \$34,884 | |
| ESU 06-MILFORD | \$34,700 | |
| NORFOLK | \$34,690 | |
| ELKHORN | \$34,679 | |
| RAYMOND CENTRAL | \$34,675 | |
| WALLACE 65R | \$34,668 | |
| NORRIS | \$34,660 | |
| NORTH BEND CENTRAL | \$34,614 | |
| ESU 10-KEARNEY | \$34,568 | |
| HEARTLAND | \$34,533 | |

| TOP 25 | | |
|---|----------|--|
| LINCOLN | \$75,051 | |
| OMAHA | \$70,921 | |
| TEKAMAH-HERMAN | \$64,034 | |
| PAPILLION-LAVISTA | \$63,798 | |
| ESU #11-HOLDREGE | \$63,504 | |
| ESU #13-SCOTTSBLUFF | \$63,484 | |
| HOWELLS-DODGE | \$60,368 | |
| BAYARD | \$60,325 | |
| ESU #10-KEARNEY | \$59,978 | |
| FREMONT | \$59,808 | |
| UMO ^N HO ^N NATION | \$59,808 | |
| RAYMOND CENTRAL | \$59,641 | |
| RALSTON | \$59,490 | |
| MALCOLM | \$59,224 | |
| WISNER-PILGER | \$59,200 | |
| SYRACUSE-DUNBAR-AVOCA | \$59,150 | |
| BRIDGEPORT | \$58,863 | |
| LYONS-DECATUR | \$58,696 | |
| NORTH BEND CENTRAL | \$58,652 | |
| HEMINGFORD | \$58,463 | |
| COLUMBUS | \$58,450 | |
| KEARNEY | \$58,219 | |
| WEST POINT | \$58,192 | |
| LAKEVIEW | \$58,146 | |
| WINNEBAGO | \$58,130 | |

| TOP 25 | | |
|------------------------|----------|--|
| LINCOLN | \$79,488 | |
| OMAHA | \$75,241 | |
| FREMONT | \$74,515 | |
| SYRACUSE-DUNBAR-AVOCA | \$74,360 | |
| PAPILLION-LAVISTA | \$72,888 | |
| NORTH PLATTE | \$72,690 | |
| ESU #11-HOLDREGE | \$72,576 | |
| COLUMBUS | \$72,461 | |
| ESU #09-HASTINGS | \$72,154 | |
| NORFOLK | \$71,808 | |
| ESU #06-MILFORD | \$71,135 | |
| ESU #15-TRENTON | \$70,823 | |
| GRAND ISLAND | \$70,010 | |
| ESU #04-AUBURN | \$69,962 | |
| NORRIS | \$69,667 | |
| LEXINGTON | \$69,422 | |
| RALSTON | \$69,405 | |
| GERING | \$69,381 | |
| BELLEVUE | \$69,324 | |
| ESU #13-SCOTTSBLUFF | \$69,187 | |
| SPRINGFIELD PLATTEVIEW | \$69,112 | |
| ESU #03-OMAHA | \$68,742 | |
| HOMER | \$68,640 | |
| SOUTH SIOUX CITY | \$68,591 | |
| SCOTTSBLUFF | \$68,370 | |

STARTING SALARIES



| BOTTOM 25 | | |
|------------------|----------|--|
| BERTRAND | \$31,150 | |
| WAUNETA-PALISADE | \$31,100 | |
| MAYWOOD | \$31,000 | |
| O'NEILL | \$30,925 | |
| ANSLEY | \$30,900 | |
| CALLAWAY | \$30,900 | |
| MULLEN | \$30,800 | |
| SHELTON | \$30,800 | |
| ST. EDWARD | \$30,800 | |
| HYANNIS | \$30,750 | |
| LOUP COUNTY | \$30,675 | |
| ESU 07-COLUMBUS | \$30,648 | |
| SPALDING | \$30,600 | |
| ELBA | \$30,450 | |
| EWING | \$30,400 | |
| SANDHILLS | \$30,357 | |
| SARGENT | \$30,300 | |
| ARCADIA | \$30,255 | |
| CODY-KILGORE | \$30,000 | |
| MINATARE | \$30,000 | |
| ARNOLD | \$29,900 | |
| ALLIANCE | \$29,800 | |
| ESU 17-AINSWORTH | \$29,500 | |
| WHEELER CENTRAL | \$29,250 | |
| SUTHERLAND | \$29,100 | |

MASTER'S DEGREE – MAX



| BOTTOM 25 | | |
|-------------------|----------|--|
| KEYA PAHA | \$50,482 | |
| OVERTON | \$50,440 | |
| LITCHFIELD | \$50,400 | |
| NIOBRARA | \$50,388 | |
| SIOUX COUNTY | \$50,310 | |
| GREELEY-WOLBACH | \$50,080 | |
| HAYES CENTER | \$49,849 | |
| SUTHERLAND | \$49,761 | |
| LOUP COUNTY | \$49,694 | |
| ARCADIA | \$49,618 | |
| PAXTON | \$49,612 | |
| AMHERST | \$49,533 | |
| CEDAR RAPIDS | \$49,454 | |
| NORTH LOUP-SCOTIA | \$49,454 | |
| MULLEN | \$49,280 | |
| RED CLOUD | \$49,218 | |
| HARVARD | \$49,096 | |
| EWING | \$49,020 | |
| LYNCH | \$48,868 | |
| ST. EDWARD | \$48,664 | |
| MINATARE | \$48,000 | |
| ALLIANCE | \$47,829 | |
| SPALDING | \$47,736 | |
| ELBA | \$47,502 | |
| CODY-KILGORE | \$46,800 | |

SALARY SCHEDULE – MAX



| BOTTOM 25 | | |
|-------------------------|----------|--|
| NEWMAN GROVE | \$54,352 | |
| McPHERSON COUNTY | \$54,322 | |
| SUMNER-EDDYVILLE-MILLER | \$54,266 | |
| RED CLOUD | \$54,266 | |
| GILTNER | \$54,264 | |
| NIOBRARA | \$54,264 | |
| EWING | \$54,036 | |
| ELGIN | \$54,023 | |
| LOUP COUNTY | \$53,988 | |
| STERLING | \$53,928 | |
| WAUNETA-PALISADE | \$53,803 | |
| WEST BOYD | \$53,541 | |
| CEDAR RAPIDS | \$53,523 | |
| WYNOT | \$53,508 | |
| ARTHUR COUNTY | \$53,508 | |
| WHEELER CENTRAL | \$52,943 | |
| SANDHILLS | \$52,518 | |
| ARCADIA | \$52,341 | |
| STUART | \$52,285 | |
| CODY-KILGORE | \$52,200 | |
| ELBA | \$51,765 | |
| LYNCH | \$51,440 | |
| ST. EDWARD | \$51,282 | |
| MINATARE | \$50,700 | |
| SPALDING | \$50,490 | |



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Membership: 'For All it's Worth'

NSEA Campaign Offers Updates on Membership, Benefits

NSEA's new For all it's Worth campaign is an easy-to-use series designed to keep you informed about your Association, its benefits and value.

Each month, the series will provide easy-to-access information about your membership. Throughout the school year, you will receive these monthly membership editions via email, which fall under three key areas: Membership Benefits, Working Conditions and Action & Advocacy.

In the Classroom: Student Achievement

As back to school excitement has passed and students have settled into their academic routines, there is still much to be taught and learning to be had. That's why NSEA is here. To make certain you are supplied with the right resources, support system and voice to ensure each student's



academic needs are met – your needs included.

A teacher's working conditions are a student's learning conditions. And your association works with you and on your behalf to ensure students of all ages, and of varying learning needs and exceptionalities, are provided exactly what they need to attain scholastic achievement.

With your membership, you have the united voice and the tools to:

- Fight to ensure class size is appropriate to serve all children.
- Ensure adequate school funding for schools and school districts, which directly impacts class size.
- Employ your background and training to provide all levels of quality instruction for students.
- Maintain the highest level of instruction and safety in the classroom.

Join in the conversation and take advantage of the benefits. It's time to experience your membership For all it's Worth.

Watch for news and updates from the For all it's Worth campaign in your email in-box, on Facebook and online.

nsea.org

Evaluation Issue? Administrative Problem?

Your NSEA Edge: Field Staff Can Help Resolve Such Issues

Threats to your job, and to your teaching certificate, can come from inside your building. Consider these questions members sent through the NSEA website to the Association's field staff:

"I am having a problem with the principal. Could you please send me the name/number of my rep so that I may talk with him/her."

"I would like to talk with someone to assist in writing a rebuttal of an evaluation."

NSEA's 18 field staffers – known as organizational specialists – are well-versed in handling such situations. They understand the dynamics of working with school administrators, know the right questions to ask and the right people to talk with in order to resolve such issues.

Threats to your teaching certificate can also come from unexpected sources. For instance, these questions arrived in the NSEA website "in-box" in recent months, as well:

"I have had a family get disgruntled with me. I would

like to get some things documented. Where do I start?"

"I need to know what I can do about being bullied and threatened by a parent, if anything. We have tried through our administrators but she ignores them as well. It is an almost daily occurrence."



Educators can have a seemingly good year turn sour quickly, if such issues are not addressed appropriately. Your NSEA organizational specialist can help

resolve such issues.

The dues you pay to NSEA and to NEA support the field staff program. Those field staff, in turn, support your classroom work by supplying answers and support when you are most in need. **The kind of backing and expertise you get from NSEA's 18 well-trained organizational specialists is simply not available from any other source, period. That's why it pays to be an NSEA member.**

Questions? Call NSEA at 1-800-742-0047. Or e-mail your question via the 'Contact Us!' link on the NSEA website at:

nsea.org

It's Never Too Soon!

Friends, Co-Workers Do Wonderful Work:
Nominate a Colleague for Recognition!

Delegate Assembly Returns to Lincoln in '15

Is there a teacher or education support professional in your school building who does outstanding work day after day? The answer, of course, is yes!

Any NSEA member may nominate a deserving individual or group for the awards, below, to be presented at the 2015 NSEA Delegate Assembly. All mailed nominations must be postmarked by Saturday, Jan. 31, 2015, and should be sent to NSEA Awards, 605 S. 14th St., Lincoln, NE 68508-2742. Nominations may also be submitted online, with any required supporting material mailed to the NSEA. Online forms for the awards may be found under the 'Call for Nominations' link on the NSEA website at:

www.nsea.org

The 2015 Delegate Assembly, NSEA's 154th such convention, is set to return to Lincoln in 2015 and will be held at the Embassy Suites.

NSEA members are eligible for:

■ **NSEA Rookie of the Year:** To honor a first-year teacher who sparked in the 2013-14 school year.

■ **Award for Teaching Excellence:** To honor a teacher who has excelled in the classroom over a 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 in each category announced at the Delegate Assembly on April 24-25. Each receives a \$250 cash award. In addition, the Teaching Excellence winner competes for the NEA Teaching Excellence Award and \$25,000.

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

■ **Great Plains Milestone Award:** Honors an individual/group for promoting human and civil rights within their community or the state.

■ **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, and promotion of educational excellence.

These awards will also be presented:

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

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



One of Many Awards Given: From NSEA's Elkhorn District, Vice President Gwen Smith of Fremont and President Tracia Blom of South Sioux City accepted the William Gallagher Award for membership at the 2014 NSEA Delegate Assembly.

Examples of dated material may be included.

For more details, go to:
nsea.org

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Activ. Fee: \$35/line. Credit approval required. \$60 Unlimited Plan. Offer ends 3/15/2015. Includes unlimited domestic Long Distance calling, texting and data. Third-party content/downloads are add'l charge. Int'l svcs are not included. Pricing may vary for existing customers. Excludes discounted phones. Plan will appear on your bill as \$30/Unltd Talk and Text and \$30/Unltd Data. Includes unlimited on-network data. Customers under a 1 or 2 year Service Agreement and moving to the Sprint \$60 Unlimited plan have a higher monthly rate of up to \$25/month until they reach upgrade eligibility. Early Upgrade for Easy Pay: Req. active add-on (by time of upgrade with min. 12 consecutive payments of both the add-on and an installment agreement, for phones, new phone installment agreement, req. in good standing, and give back of current eligible device in good and functional condition. After upgrade, remaining unbillable installment payments for giveback device are waived. Requires enrollment within 30 days of new activation or upgrade on eligible phone. Usage Limitations: Other plans may receive prioritized bandwidth availability. To improve data experience for the majority of users, throughput may be limited, varied or reduced on the network. Sprint may terminate service if off-network roaming usage in a month exceeds: (1) 800 min. or a majority of min; or (2) 300MB or a majority of KB; prohibited network use rules apply - see sprint.com/termsandconditions. SDP Discount: Avail. for eligible company employees or org. members (ongoing verification). Discount subject to change according to the company's agreement with Sprint and is avail. upon request for select monthly svc charges. Discount only applies to data service for Sprint \$60 Unlimited Plan. Not avail. with no credit check offers or Mobile hotspot add-on. Other Terms: Offers and coverage not available everywhere or for all phone/networks. No discounts apply to \$30/Unltd Talk and Text portion of plan or \$5 Early Upgrade option. May not be combined with other offers. There is no minimum term applied based on the \$60 Unlimited plan, but the Service Agreement applied and automatically continues on a month-to-month basis unless you contact us to inform us of any changes, including cancellation. There may be a minimum annual term applied or continued based on a discounted device purchase or other offer. Restrictions apply. See store or sprint.com for details. The Nationwide Sprint Network reaches over 281 million people; Sprint 3G network reaches over 281 million people; Sprint 4G LTE network reaches over 250 million people. See sprint.com/coverage. © 2014 Sprint. All rights reserved. H44343

Nebraska Can Do This Right: A QuESTT

Sound Data Fuels Nebraska School Improvement

By Dr. Matt Blomstedt,
Nebraska Commissioner
of Education

As teachers and administrators, you know Nebraska schools are providing our students with excellent educational opportunities and student learning continues to improve. You also know that the news media headlines on federal accountability are misleading.

Federal accountability under No Child Left Behind has failed and, worse yet, its identification of schools as Not Met or In Need of Improvement —when many have improved — is unfair.

The Nebraska Department of Education does not agree with the current federal policy.

I do not believe that all of our schools are low performing. Common sense tells us that expecting 100 percent proficiency in reading and math is an unrealistic goal. A system that brands an entire school community as failing when one child in one grade in one subject area scores just below proficiency is flawed. Yet, that is what is happening under No Child Left Behind.

And, Nebraska's accountability system that ranks schools and districts provides little information that informs school improvement.

The federal accountability system is not working.

We Will Meet the Challenge

Nebraska can do this right.

Our greatest challenge is finding better ways to engage and support the learning of every student, every day. We know that test scores are important, but we also know that making decisions or judgments about a student or a school on one test score or one measurement is unfair and wrong.

Nebraska's strong commitment to

every student, every day, is the basis of a new era of public school accountability, a system named A QuESTT: Accountability for a Quality Education System, Today and Tomorrow.

A QuESTT is under development now by the State Board of Education and the Nebraska Department of Education. A QuESTT will expand our current system that ranks schools and districts on student state test scores, graduation rates and participation on state tests to look at the quality of the education practices in a school or district to ensure continuous improvement.



Blomstedt

Continuous Improvement

Yes, A QuESTT will continue to look at student test scores, graduation rates, individual student growth and school and district improvement over time.

It also will give schools and districts credit for putting forth the work and investment needed to support

those elements that build a school or district that provides a quality educational experience for every student, every day.

To fully implement A QuESTT, Nebraska will need sound data which will allow the state to measure more quality indicators such as whether districts are graduating college and career ready students; school district educator effectiveness; how the school supports students transitioning between grades, programs or other schools; postsecondary and career education opportunities available to high schoolers; and the availability and quality of parent and community engagement programs.




Continuous school improvement is the key.

While A QuESTT will be phased in over time as quality data are available, the State Board of Education will consider finalizing the initial phase in December.

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Jennifer Swerczek
jlswerc@nppd.com
402-336-2701

Chad Johnson
cejohns@nppd.com
402-604-1112

Nebraska Public Power District



Leadership in Action!

More than 30 members of the Student Education Association of Nebraska met in October at the Eastern Nebraska 4-H Center south of Gretna for a leadership retreat and exercise. In addition to learning more about the organization, they had an opportunity to get acquainted, as well. At left, University of Nebraska-Omaha student Jessi Oerter, right, suggests one way to get Wayne State's Emily Wilmes across an obstacle course might be to carry her. Above, Grace University's Jason West briefs SEAN members on his team's assessment of SEAN's work and goals during a Leadership Session exercise.

First Year Teacher?

Former SEAN Members Eligible for Dues Rebate

Are you a first-year teacher, just out of college?

If so, and if you were a member of the Student Education Association of Nebraska in college, you may be eligible for a rebate on SEAN dues.

NSEA offers a one-time, \$10 rebate for every year you were a member of SEAN. And this year, NEA is offering an additional \$20 rebate for each year you were a member of SEAN. If, as a student, you were a member of SEAN all four years of college, the rebate of \$30 for each year could total \$120!

For a rebate form, contact your local association president, or download the form at:

nsea.org/member_info/nsea-treasurers-packet



You asked for them...

and now they're coming to the
**Nebraska State Reading Association
2015 Conference**

February 26-28
Kearney, NE

- **Stephanie Harvey**
- **Jan Richardson**
- **Cris Tovani**
- **Dinah Zike**
- **Kim Bearden**

Visit www.NeReads.org to find conference information including Conference-at-a-Glance with presenter schedules, events, exhibit times, and other options.

Save With Dave!

The need for life insurance, especially for those educators with a family, is not taken lightly.

The NEA Member Benefits program takes that need seriously, and offers several plans for your consideration. Each plan offers highly competitive, low monthly premiums at group discounted rates. They also offer flexible coverage levels from \$25,000 to \$500,000, with benefits remaining level until age 70.

In all cases, check for details under the 'Insurance' tab on the NEA Member Benefits website at:

neamb.com

The NEA Level Premium Group Term Life Insurance Plan offers coverage of up to \$1 million, with 10-year, 15-year and 20-year terms available.

Lower rates are offered for most coverage amounts and terms, with full coverage up to age 80. Premiums won't increase due to your age and benefits won't decrease for the entire term.

The NEA Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance Plan offers optional coverage for family members.

Rates are quite economical and begin at \$19 per year. Coverage ranges up to \$130,000 for coverage at home or away, with up to \$520,000 in coverage for an accident on a plane, train, ship or other public conveyance. The plan also has a guaranteed acceptance clause, with no medical exams.

Each year, for the first five years of coverage, the benefit payable for covered accidents on a public conveyance will increase \$10,000.

The NEA Guaranteed Issue Life Plan provides guaranteed coverage acceptance for members and spouses ages 45 and older, with no medical exam, no health questions.

Participants can choose one of two plans: Up to \$10,000 or \$20,000 worth of decreasing term life insurance, regardless of your health, depending on age.

For details, go to:

neamb.com

*David Glenn is Nebraska's
NEA Member Benefits representative*



Glenn

Home Insurance Gaps May Need to be Filled

Make sure your policy provides enough coverage!

You may already know that homeowners insurance doesn't cover flood damage or sewage backup. But what about things your policy covers, but might not cover sufficiently?

Replacing your home. In the event of a disaster that leads to a total loss, your policy pays up to the dwelling limit. If that's less than the cost to rebuild your home, you have to make up the difference. Your insurer estimates the cost to rebuild, but to make sure its estimate is accurate, use an online calculator, available at sites such as hmfacts.com (\$7) and accucoverage.com (\$8). To get full replacement coverage for partial losses, most insurers require you to have a policy with a dwelling limit of 80% or more of the insurer-estimated cost to rebuild, notes Bill Wilson, associate vice-president of the Independent Insurance Agents & Brokers of America.

Your policy should include an inflation guard clause keyed to regional costs that adjusts your coverage every year. Also, make sure your policy has extended replacement cost — ideally, for 20 percent to 25 percent above the dwelling limit; you can add it as an endorsement for about \$50. If you have to rebuild your home to bring it up to current code, you'll need ordinance and law coverage. You should be able to bump up your coverage to 25 percent of

the dwelling limit for about \$50 a year.

High-value belongings. All policies cover your personal property, typically up to 50 percent of your dwelling limit. But policies generally limit reimbursement for jewelry, silverware and collectibles, such as stamps and coins, to \$1,000 to \$2,500. Most policies cover you if items are stolen, but not if they are lost or damaged. Plus, they pay out actual cash value (depreciated based on the age of the item) rather than replacement cost.

If you buy a rider (\$10 to \$20 per \$1,000 in coverage a year for jewelry and silver, for example), you can collect the replacement cost if you file a claim. It also eliminates the deductible and covers mysterious disappearance and breakage for fragile items.

Home office. Most homeowner policies limit coverage for business equipment to \$2,500 and provide no liability coverage for business use of your home. If you have clients or delivery people coming to your home office regularly, or you have more than \$2,500 in equipment used for business, you'll need more coverage. A separate home-office policy can provide liability and contents coverage for a couple hundred dollars a year.

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Kiplinger

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Holiday Planning Center Helps NEA Members Stress Less!

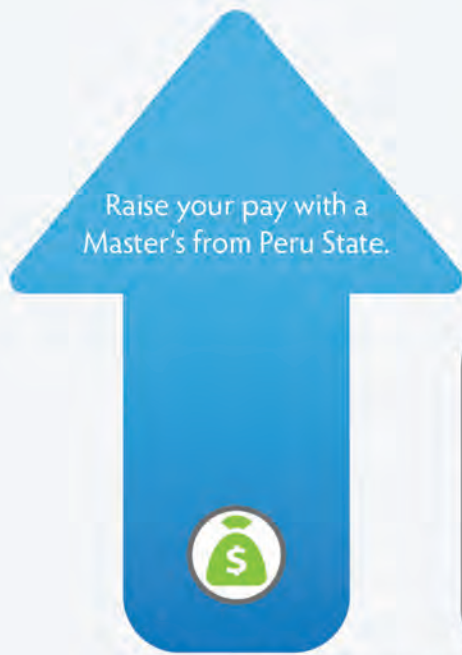
Are you ready for the holidays? NEA Member Benefits wants to help you kick off this joyous season with members-only resources so you can enjoy your family, stay healthy, stick to your budget and reduce stress.

Starting now, visit www.neamb.com/holiday to get helpful tips and advice on:

- **Holiday shopping:** 7 tips to wrap up your gift list quickly, how to cash in with customer rewards during the holidays, how to ship holiday gifts for less, and more.
- **Holiday travel:** Know your rights when holiday travel goes wrong, 10 steps to hassle-free holiday hosting, how to bring your family home for the holidays, and more.
- **Holiday health and wellness:** 8 no-diet tips to keep holiday weight gain at bay.
- **Holiday finances and budget:** How to maximize your holiday budget, ways to avoid wasting money during the holidays, 6 smart money moves to make before year-end, and more.

Save time and money this holiday season at :

www.neamb.com/holiday today



Average salary for an educator in Nebraska before and after earning an MSED



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



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

10,125

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

*Tuition is subject to change.



19

Number of months it takes to complete the MSED cohort program.

If you begin in June 2015, you will graduate in December 2016.



Average cohort size:



Number of hours you will spend on campus.

0

Our program is **100%** online.

Women's Work

In high school, my daughter lettered in volleyball, swimming and dance. Those interests, plus softball, triathlon and half-marathons, led to a master's degree in sports administration and a life's career. She once questioned why there were no girls' sports in my high school yearbook. When I went to high school, boys played sports and the girls watched or cheered. It was a reflection of society at that time... and, in some ways, still reflects the fact that many women and girls watch the success of men from the sidelines.

My grandmother used to talk of "bloomers" — the pants that some daring women wore in the late 1800s to allow them the freedom of movement to bike, hike or play sports. Amelia Bloomer, a vocal proponent for women wearing pants, was belittled and ridiculed for what society now accepts as perfectly natural behavior. Bloomer was fighting against a cultural norm that did not expect women to wear pants. When my daughter asked why girls did not play sports in my high school, she was really asking about an institutional norm — a regulation — that did not allow girls to participate. While Iowa has had girls' school sports since 1898, Nebraska did not allow girls to participate in school sports until much later. These are institutional norms — laws, regulations, or institutional expectations.

Invisible Practice

When institutional rules are coupled with cultural norms of behavior for girls, the ensuring barriers to opportunity, participation — and achievement — are formidable. But this is not just about who gets to play in high school sports. The majority of most school boards — and school superintendents — are men. The overwhelming majority of teachers are women. Surprised? This is not a result of law or regulation. It is my daughter's question: why do women and girls have to watch the success of men from the sidelines?

The practice of gender discrimination is so prevalent that it is often invisible. Many of the institutions in our lives

have significantly higher expectations — and opportunities — for men than for women. Women are in relatively fewer positions of leadership, tend to earn less money, and tend to be regarded as less competent or experienced in important, sought-after characteristics for candidates for advancement or leadership positions. We are all familiar with job application forms that ask for experience related to the available job.

The cultural barrier for women is that much of women's expert experience is disregarded. If an applicant reported deep experience as a transportation pool coordinator, budget analyst, human resource counselor, procurement officer, training manager, or bookkeeper, the prospective employer would be very impressed. If that experience came from a young mother with a family, most employers could be expected to completely ignore it. It is a common example of cultural, and for many jobs, a structural bias against the competent experience of women.

An Impossible Task

Most western European countries provide state-sponsored child care, based on the ability of the family to pay. In our society, most families, especially single mothers, must work out a delicate balance between work and childcare. It is often an impossible task that mothers in other industrialized nations do not have to face. In our society, the high cost is not only in childcare, but in the barriers to success for women who work hard to succeed without the structural

or institutional support they need to ensure either their own or their child's success.

Many girls in our communities will not have the same future that boys can expect. Our daughters, sisters, and nieces deserve better. Our society deserves better. Working towards true equality for women in all of this society's institutions, including our community's public schools, ought to be the work of all of us. It is not and never has been only "women's work." What part in this work will you take?



She Fought the Cultural Norm: NSEA Executive Director Craig R. Christiansen at the burial site of Amelia Bloomer.

It's Easy to Be a Lifetime Member!

Joining is Easy, Membership Worthwhile

As a member of NSEA-Retired, you are able to continue your NEA Member Benefit Programs, support your colleagues, and support public education and Nebraska's children.

Active NSEA members may join as Pre-Retired Lifetime members while still teaching.

Retired educators may join as Lifetime members or Annual members if they are at least 50 and were an Active member in the Association the year they retired.

Check out the "Join Now" link on the NSEA website for further details and for reasons why NSEA-Retired membership makes good sense. Pre-retired members can join under this same link, found at:

nsea.org/nsea-retired-join-now

Local Retired Association News for 2014-15 Lincoln Education Association-Retired

The Lincoln Education Association-Retired boasts 44 members and a full set of officers. President is Jan Rowe; vice president is Arlene Rea; secretary is Barbara Hetcko; and treasurer is Billie Bussmann. They may be reached at:

jrowe@lps.org

arlenerea36@yahoo.com

hetckobandj@msn.com

bbuss@neb.rr.com

Programs include a 10 a.m. tour on Nov. 19 of Channels 10-11 television station; a Dec. 10 potluck at the Ferguson House, starting at 11:30 a.m.; a 9:30 a.m., Jan. 21 look at brain research by UNL graduate student Cathy Cortesa at Sheridan Lutheran Church; a Feb. 18 look at your antiques by appraiser Tom Bassett; a March 18 study of The Story of Chocolate, 9:30 a.m. at Sheridan Lutheran; an April 15 look at Medicare Fraud and You; the May 13 Scholarship Awards luncheon, 11:30 a.m. at Hillcrest Country Club; and a June 3 breakfast for members and new retirees, site not yet set.

Elkhorn/Sandhills Education Association-Retired

The Elkhorn/Sandhills affiliate has a full schedule of events set for the 27 members.

President is LuEttta M. Clark, and the secretary is LaRene Konopasek. Pat Monson is treasurer. Clark can be reached at 402-329-6601. Konopasek and Monson can be reached at:

lakono@yahoo.com

pmonson@cableone.net

Dues are \$5, and include a full schedule of events this year, including a Nov. 17 meeting at Neligh that features a carry-in dinner, business meeting and fun and games; a February 17 meeting at Norfolk, with a tour of the Norfolk Veteran's Home, followed by lunch and a business meeting; and a June 15 meeting at Pierce, featuring a tour of the Gilman Park Arboretum, followed by lunch and a business meeting.

Issues of concern for this affiliate include membership, state tax exemption status on retirement accounts.

Central Panhandle Chapter NSEA-Retired

Twila Griffiths is president of the Central Panhandle Chapter. Karon Harvey is program chair and Janet Gardner is secretary/treasurer. The chapter has 35 members, and dues are \$3.



At NEA Representative Assembly: Representing NSEA-Retired at the annual NEA meeting this summer in Denver were, from left, NSEA-Retired President Roger Rea, Omaha; Vice President Tom Black, West Point; Carol Krejci, Omaha; Capitol District Representative De Tonack, Lincoln; Pat Etherton, Lincoln; and Metro District Representative John Jensen, Omaha.

Local Association Meetings held at 11 a.m. at the Scottsbluff Godfather's Pizza. Meetings are set for:

- Nov. 17, featuring Tom Perkins and updates on Western Nebraska Community College;
 - Jan. 19, with Community Action Team's Jean Lashley;
 - Feb. 16, with Jim McDermott and the NSEA-Retired Lobby Day Report;
 - March 16, with Karen Long from the Office on Aging;
 - April 20, with Mike Sarchet and development updates.
- A meeting is set for May 18, but the program is not set.

Platte Valley Retired Education Association

Hastings retiree Mary Ann Niemoth is president of the Platte Valley affiliate. Yvette Engelhaupt is vice president and LaVila VanBoening is secretary. Christy Hewitt is treasurer and Marianne Fitzgibbon chairs the card committee.

The affiliate boasts 73 members. Annual dues are \$10. Officers can be contacted at these email addresses, respectively:

mniemoth@gmail.com

yengelha@charter.net

lavila928@windstream.net

chewitt51@msn.com

mfitzgib@gpcom.net

Local Association meetings are set for:

- Nov. 5 at 2 p.m. at the Hastings YMCA, with Rod and Laverne Epp and Jan Greenland, and "Interesting People and Events From the U.S. Civil War."
- Feb. 4 at 2 p.m. at the Grand Island 1st National Bank, with Ron Sack and "Memorabilia Displayed at the Museum of Nebraska Major League Baseball."
- May 6 at 2 p.m. at the Grand Island 1st National Bank, with Tracie Tucker and the "Last Child on the Prairie."

Learn more at:

nsea.org/platte-valley-retired-education-association

— Renae Kelly, Editor
renaekelly@gmail.com

Higher Ed Shuffle Plays to Strengths

NSEA has reorganized – at the request of members – how the Association’s 18 organizational specialists are assigned to serve members at the state’s institutions of higher education.

The realignment was formulated over the past spring and summer and became effective with the new Association year on Aug. 1.

NSEA President Nancy Fulton said the assignments play to the strengths of staff and the needs of different campuses.

“Our members at the higher education level should be pleased,” said Fulton. “This is a very capable and resourceful team.”

Under the new alignment, organizational specialists Ron Goldenstein and Rich Wergin, along with researcher Larry Scherer and organizational specialist Mike Wiesen will work on bargaining issues for all higher education campuses. Goldenstein has worked bargaining issues for NSEA for nearly 40 years; Wergin is a longtime local leader and negotiator at Seward and has been on NSEA staff for five years. Scherer was legal counsel to the Legislature’s Education Committee for many years and has been with NSEA since 2006. Wiesen is a longtime organizational



Nickels



Longoria



Pittman



Wergin



Wehrbein

specialist and has a master’s degree in economics.

In addition, five NSEA organizational specialists are assigned to work with members at campuses across the state. Those assignments include:

- **Maureen Nickels:** University of Nebraska at Kearney and all Central Community College campuses.
- **Andrea Longoria:** Mid-Plains Community College and Western Nebraska Community College campuses.
- **Matt Pittman:** Southeast Community College and Metro Community College campuses.
- **Rich Wergin:** Northeast Community College.
- **Marlene Wehrbein:** Chadron State, Wayne State and Peru State colleges.

To reach your organizational specialist, call NSEA at 1-800-742-0047.

State Board’s Witzel Pens Education Thriller

“When Madden stops at Tres Rios, New Mexico, on his way to California to pursue a doctorate in education, he doesn’t expect to stay past lunch.”

So begins the back cover teaser for the novel *Saving Tres Rios*, written by John Witzel, a member of Nebraska’s State Board of Education.



Witzel

It isn’t often a member of the State Board writes a novel, much less a novel in the fiction/thriller/military genre that includes an uplifting educational theme. Yet Witzel has done exactly that.

His book tells the story of decorated veteran Robert Madden, who now has one goal in life: to work in the classroom. He is waylaid on his way to California to work on his final degree, and that is where the action

unfolds.

Saving Tres Rios is a quick and easy read, written with a good understanding of the teaching profession and the challenges that teachers face. A copy may be ordered from the Omaha publisher at wildcatterpublish.com, or through Amazon.com. It is also available on Kindle Reader.



In the News: Loup County

Four student members of the Loup County FBLA last spring became the first Nebraska team to qualify for the National FBLA LifeSmarts Championship program, which was held at Walt Disney World in Orlando.

The Loup County team is coached by **Loup County Education Association** member **Amy Copper Sabatka**. She is the business education teacher at Loup County High School.

The LifeSmarts program is sponsored by the National Consumers League and prepares students to become smart adult consumers. Students develop teamwork, self-esteem, verbal skills and leadership abilities.

It also helps provide students with an understanding of their consumer rights and responsibilities.

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

NSEA RECOMMENDED CANDIDATES

GOVERNOR & LT. GOV. CHUCK HASSEBROOK & JANE RAYBOULD

U.S. SENATE

DAVE DOMINA

CONGRESS

DISTRICT 2: BRAD ASHFORD

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|---|----------------|----------------------------------|----|-----------------------------|
| NEBRASKA STATE LEGISLATURE | 02 | RON NOLTE | 26 | MATT HANSEN |
| | 03 | CAROL BLOOD & SEN. TOMMY GARRETT | 28 | PATTY PANSING BROOKS |
| | 04 | BOB HILKEMANN | 30 | ROY BAKER |
| | 06 | JOHN STALNAKER | 32 | PHIL HARDENBURGER |
| | 08 | SEN. BURKE HARR | 34 | CURT FRIESEN |
| | 10 | SEN. BOB KRIST | 36 | MATT WILLIAMS & LUIS SOTELO |
| | 12 | MERV RIEPE & GREG HOSCH | 42 | RORIC PAULMAN |
| | 16 | SEN. LYDIA BRASCH | 44 | NO RECOMMENDATION |
| | 18 | MIKE TESAR | 46 | ADAM MORFELD |
| | 20 | MATT LATHROP | 48 | NO RECOMMENDATION |
| 24 | MARK KOLTERMAN | | | |
| STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION | 5 | PAT TIMM | 7 | MOLLY O'HOLLERAN |
| | 6 | MAUREEN NICKELS | 8 | BOB MEYERS |

**VOTE
NOV. 4**