

The VOICE

Nebraska State Education Assoc.

September 2026



Be The One Who Steps In

*From Hardship to Helping,
GLEA Member Pays It Forward*

- Reminder to Check Your Paycheck

- Explore the Interactive Field Staff Map

- Meet the 2026-27 Board of Directors

Nebraska State Education Association
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NEA Vice President Visits Nebraska Educators

NEA Vice President Noel Candelaria kicked off the National Education Association's Back-to-School Tour in Nebraska, spending three days in Omaha meeting with educators, students, community leaders and workers.

Candelaria's visit included stops at Omaha South High School and Edward "Babe" Gomez Heritage Elementary, where he met with educators and saw firsthand how Omaha Public Schools staff are creating opportunities for students and building school communities where all students feel a sense of belonging.

Throughout the visit, Candelaria emphasized the important role educators play not only in their classrooms and schools, but also in the communities they serve. "With our NSEA members, I talked about our superpower as trusted educators — and why telling our stories, organizing our communities, and showing up publicly for our students and profession matters," Candelaria wrote following the visit.

Candelaria also met with Latino community leaders and visited the Center for Immigrant and Refugee Advancement, or CIRA, which received NEA's 2026 Acción y Compromiso Human and Civil Rights Award.

The Omaha-based organization provides legal, social and refugee services to immigrant and refugee families. The visit gave Candelaria an opportunity to learn more about CIRA's work and the connections between Nebraska's schools and the communities they serve.

Candelaria also spent time talking with NSEA members about organizing, advocacy and the power educators have when they share their experiences with the public.

"Strong locals build strong states — and strong states build a stronger NEA," he said. The tour extended beyond Nebraska's schools. Candelaria joined members of Teamsters Local 554 on the picket line, standing in solidarity with workers who had been on strike since February.

For Candelaria, the stops reflected a common theme that carried throughout his three days in Omaha: community, belonging, organizing and power. "Nebraska, gracias for the welcome," Candelaria wrote. "Now let's keep organizing. Together, we build power."

Would You Like to Write for The Voice?

Would you like to write an item for *The Voice*? Perhaps an opinion column or an article on what is working in your classroom? Submissions can be classroom-related, humorous, inspiring or otherwise teaching related. Submit your questions about the process, and your topics to us at:

thevoice@nsea.org

On the Cover: From experiencing homelessness as a student to helping students facing the same barriers today, GIEA member Brian Whitecalf knows the difference one caring adult can make. Read his powerful story on pages 7–8.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

TIM ROYERS

A Place for Every Member

Welcome to the start of what I am sure will be another exciting school year! As thousands of students pour back into our classrooms, from preschool through our colleges and universities, your hard work and dedication are already making a difference in students' lives.

Being able to travel the state and meet new educators is energizing, and it reminds us here at the NSEA what a privilege it is to advocate for you and for our profession. This year, we are taking several steps to strengthen the connections between our members and the wider association.

Finding Your Place

This summer, NSEA members represented Nebraska at the NEA Representative Assembly (RA) in Denver, joining thousands of educators from across the country to help shape the direction of our national association. There were serious debates, important decisions and, apparently, at least one occasion that called for an inflatable unicorn costume. I have learned that representing Nebraska sometimes requires versatility.

But that is also part of what makes these experiences so valuable. RA brings together educators with different roles, backgrounds and perspectives around a shared purpose, while reminding us that being involved in our union can be meaningful, energizing and, yes, even fun.

That same idea was behind our decision this summer to hold six summer conferences across the state. We want to break down geographic barriers and make it easier for members to connect, learn and discover new ways to become involved.

That work continues this fall. Newly elected NEA Vice President Noel Candelaria visited Nebraska

to tour schools, meet with members and potential members and connect with our community partners. Later this fall, the National Council of Urban Education Associations, which represents local affiliates with 250 or more certificated staff, will bring its annual fall conference to downtown Omaha. Both offer opportunities to strengthen the connections between Nebraska educators and the work happening across our national association.

What Comes Next

This school year, we are redesigning our strategic plan to set NSEA's direction for the next several years. A core team representing perspectives from across our membership will lead that work, with opportunities for members at every level to be part of the process.

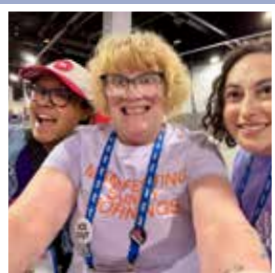
The Next Generation

Last year, we saw our best membership campaign in 15 years, growing across all membership categories. This year, we want to achieve a second consecutive year of growth while also growing the number of members who are actively engaged.

Whether you serve on a committee, attend a conference, participate in your local association or lend your voice to an issue you care about, your involvement strengthens our union and develops the leaders who will carry this work forward.

Our ability to keep this work moving forward comes down to you: your voices, your advocacy and your willingness to step up. Whatever your passion or interest, we can find an opportunity for you to get involved.

I hope you are having a great start to the school year, and I cannot wait to see all we will accomplish together in the coming months.





REMINDER!

Check Your Paycheck

Employees and employers both have a responsibility to confirm their paychecks are correct.

It's not a common problem, but it is an issue for which members have turned to NSEA for help. Sometimes it's a clerical error that causes an overpayment or underpayment of salary to a school employee. When it happens, it can cause economic hardship for a teacher or school employee. Reparations in such instances may have to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Local associations should remind or assist members in reviewing their first paycheck of each school year for accuracy. It is recommended that each local assist its members, and new members in particular, with the computations to determine whether that first check of the year is correct. Many of these problems could be avoided with such a service.

If a discrepancy is discovered, members should notify NSEA by contacting your organizational specialist at 1-800-742-0047.



Why Documenting Your Personal Items in the Classroom Matters

Many teachers go above and beyond their official duties, often using their own money to buy supplies for their classrooms. School budgets are tight, and educators are often expected to make do with limited resources. As a result, educators frequently reach into their own pockets to fill the gaps, ensuring their students have the tools they need to succeed. These can range from everyday supplies to more specific educational tools like books, technology and hands-on learning materials. Many educators also buy items for classroom decorations to help create a welcoming and engaging environment.

NSEA Director of Advocacy Jason Wiese encourages educators to document their personal classroom items with photos or videos as a safeguard for their property.

"Whether transitioning between classrooms or schools—or facing an unfortunate scenario like a reduction in force (RIF) or termination—video documentation serves as a neutral, reliable source of information," said Wiese. "Just as insurance companies advise clients to maintain a visual inventory of their property, having a detailed record of your belongings provides peace of mind. It ensures that valuable teaching tools and personal items are accounted for in case of theft, fire or other unforeseen events."

Wiese recommends storing these photos or videos on personal devices such as a cell phone or computer for easy access and security.

SCHOOL EMPLOYEE FILE CHECKLIST

Every school employee should have the following readily available:

- ✓ Profession-related certificates and licenses
- ✓ Current Negotiated Agreement
- ✓ Copies of all evaluations, with signatures
- ✓ Transcripts of higher education credits and degrees
- ✓ Letters of appointment or hire
- ✓ Employee contracts, including supplemental pay
- ✓ Yearly salary notice supplied by employer
- ✓ Record of accumulated sick leave
- ✓ Personal record of use of sick and personal leave days
- ✓ Yearly retirement statements
- ✓ Documentation of commendations, awards and honors
- ✓ Record of non-college job-related seminars, workshops and conferences
- ✓ Record of employment-related incidents
- ✓ Record of disciplinary techniques and methods used in handling student problems (note date and witnesses involved)
- ✓ Yearly school calendar
- ✓ Phone numbers for your NSEA Organizational Specialist and local association president
- ✓ Association/Building Representative contact information

BUILT BY MEMBER VOICES

Member voices shape NSEA's work and the annual all-member survey is your chance to help shape what comes next



The voices of NSEA members guide the work of the Association, helping shape its priorities as Nebraska's public schools, classrooms and the challenges facing educators and students continue to change.

Last fall, NSEA's annual all-member survey generated more than 8,000 comments from educators across Nebraska. Members shared concerns about working conditions, student behavior and absenteeism, school safety, plan time, paid family and medical leave, workplace issues and student needs. They also weighed in on whether elected officials understand the realities of their work and whether Nebraska is doing enough to encourage educators to remain in public education. Those responses helped NSEA identify the issues members most want addressed and turn them into priorities for advocacy and action.

Looking Closely at Literacy

In July, NSEA invited members to participate in open forums with state senators and Nebraska Department of Education representatives on two legislative resolutions.

LR440 grew directly from member advocacy during the 2026 legislative session. NSEA member and reading interventionist Rosey Krauel raised concerns about LB1050, which would have required third graders who did not meet reading benchmarks to repeat the grade. Her conversations with lawmakers helped shift the focus toward whether Nebraska should first improve reading screening and intervention. Sen. Jana Hughes introduced LR440 to study that question.

That conversation continued at NSEA's July forum, where members discussed testing demands, lost instructional time and the training, staffing and resources needed to effectively support struggling readers.

A second forum focused on LR455, which examines educator recruitment, retention and professional recognition. Members raised concerns about pay, plan time, working conditions, student behavior, support staff shortages and the need for educators to feel respected and heard.

Both forums put educators directly at the table with policymakers and education leaders working on issues affecting Nebraska classrooms.

Senators in the Classroom

NSEA has also worked to bring policymakers directly into members' workplaces.

In November, a collaborative initiative led by NSEA and other education organizations brought 15 state senators into Nebraska public schools. Senators observed instruction, shadowed educators and spoke directly with teachers, administrators and students.

The goal was simple: give policymakers a firsthand look at the schools affected by the decisions they make in Lincoln. Lawmakers visited schools in their own districts, and NSEA hopes to make classroom visits a regular part of how elected leaders learn about public education.

Together, these efforts show what can happen when members complete a survey, attend a meeting, share a workplace concern or speak up about an issue affecting their students. NSEA listens, identifies common concerns and works to put those concerns in front of the people who can help make change.

Now, We Need to Hear From You

This year's all-member survey will be arriving in your email this fall.

The questions may take only a few minutes to answer, but the information members provide helps guide NSEA's work throughout the year. It helps determine where the Association focuses its advocacy, what issues need greater attention and what conversations NSEA needs to bring to policymakers. This year, we want to hear from you again.

Take the survey. Tell us what is working, what is not and what you need to better serve your students and remain in the profession. Your experiences shape our priorities. Your voice moves our Association forward.

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Brian Whitecalf stands in Room 108, home to the Grand Island Archipelago Program, where he works to remove barriers for students experiencing homelessness.

Be the One Who Steps In

From Hardship to Helping, GIEA Member Pays It Forward

When first-time delegate Brian Whitecalf stepped up to the microphone at Delegate Assembly in April, nearly 300 educators were still talking, shuffling papers and settling into the business of the day.

Whitecalf, a Grand Island Education Association member, had a motion to make. The story that came with it was personal.

"I was born on a Friday," Whitecalf began. "I was born directly into the definition of homelessness. On my birthday, I was doubled up with my grandparents on a farm between Grand Island and Wood River, Nebraska. Every year, I moved into a new house until eighth grade. I lived with my grandmother in fifth grade, sixth grade and seventh grade in a duplex apartment on a twin mattress in the living room."

Within a few sentences, the bustling assembly had gone quiet. At times, his voice caught as he recounted the harder parts of his story. Still, Whitecalf was succinct and deliberate.

He told delegates about the educators who found ways to make sure he got home safely and stayed involved in school. Then he told them

why he was sharing his story. There were students like him sitting in Nebraska classrooms, and federal law guarantees them protections many educators may not realize exist.

By the time Whitecalf finished introducing the resolution, educators throughout the room were wiping away tears. For some, his story reflected pieces of their own childhoods. For others, it brought to mind students they had taught, supported or were still helping through similar circumstances.

Delegates rose in a standing ovation, and Whitecalf's new resolution affirming NSEA's support for strengthening the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act passed unanimously.

Removing the Barriers

Today, Whitecalf is a McKinney-Vento community liaison, working with students experiencing homelessness at Grand Island Public Schools. Whitecalf understands the barriers students face, the stigma attached to asking for help and how difficult it can be for students to recognize their own experiences as homelessness.

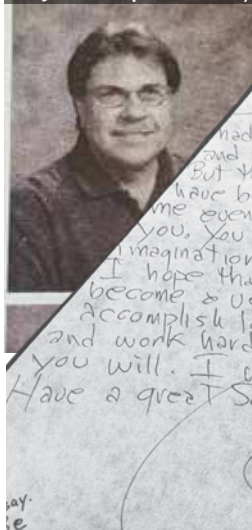
Simply asking a student whether they have ever been homeless may not tell the whole story. Whitecalf asks whether they can recall a time they stayed with friends or family because they had nowhere else to go. Under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, homelessness is broader than living on the street or in a shelter. A student who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate place to sleep may qualify for protections, including some students who are doubled up with friends or relatives, staying in a motel or sleeping in a car. There is no minimum number of nights written into the federal definition, meaning even a brief period of housing instability can matter.

"Even myself, I would have said, 'No, I wasn't homeless,'" Whitecalf said.

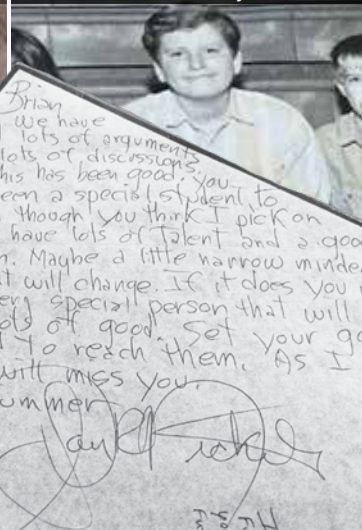
Educators Should Know

McKinney-Vento protections include immediate enrollment without waiting for documents normally required, such as proof of residency, school records or immunization records. The law also provides equal access to public education, meaning students may be able to remain at their school even if they move, receive

Gary Nickels (1940 -2022)



Whitecalf in Botany Club



Whitecalf with Mo Nickels with a sculpture created by Gary Nickels



Whitecalf with his grandmother



Whitecalf at Delegate Assembly



Sue Sands-Buss



2026 Reg Weaver Memorial Award

transportation to and from school and participate in the same programs and activities as their peers.

For Whitecalf, recognizing housing instability and understanding what comes next are equally important. Homelessness does not always mean living on the street or in a shelter, and educators need to recognize the many forms it can take and understand the protections available once a student is identified. Not every school has a dedicated McKinney-Vento advocate, making that knowledge especially important for educators who may be the first to notice a student needs help.

The Islanders

Room 108 is home to the Grand Island Archipelago Program, named for a group of islands and inspired by Grand Island's Islanders and Whitecalf's view of the students he serves.

"Some islands have more resources than others," he said. "So there are disparities, there are inconsistencies, but then you need someone to help navigate."

That navigation can mean clothing, backpacks, school supplies, beds, hygiene products or food. It can mean a ride to a medical appointment, Social Security office or barbershop. It can mean finding a student a bicycle because transportation is keeping them from getting a job. His approach is simple: Find the barrier. Then figure out how to remove it.

"We try to fill every need and eliminate the barriers," Whitecalf said.

Sometimes, removing a barrier can change the trajectory of a life.

Whitecalf knows because educators once did it for him.

A Rabbit Named Dinner

In fifth grade, Whitecalf's family life fractured. After the heat was shut off at home, he and his sisters were separated and sent to live with relatives. By junior high, he was getting into fights.

One of those fights caught a teacher's attention. Soon, another was giving Whitecalf rides home to keep him safe and out of trouble.

"Then there was a rabbit called Dinner," Whitecalf said with a smile, shifting to a happier chapter of his story.

Whitecalf followed Dinner, a cottontail hybrid, into a science classroom. There, he met science teacher Sue Sands-Buss. The rabbit may have gotten him through the door, but Sands-Buss gave him reasons to stay. She made Whitecalf her science aide and started an after-school Botany Club. For two years, she gave him a ride home every day. When summer came, she arranged for Whitecalf to take care of Dinner.

Through the Botany Club, Whitecalf met Chelsa Nickels and, eventually, her parents, educators Gary and Maureen "Mo" Nickels.

Gary Nickels became another constant in Whitecalf's life. The two argued about politics, religion and school. Nickels pushed him toward student council and other activities. When Whitecalf's grandmother died during his sophomore year, Nickels was there. When Whitecalf experienced homelessness again between his junior

and senior years, Nickels kept pushing him toward a future Whitecalf could not yet see for himself.

Nickels wanted him to become a social worker. Whitecalf had other plans. Years later, after working as a paraprofessional and finding his way into the McKinney-Vento position, Whitecalf realized Nickels, who passed away in 2022 had seen something he had not.

"This is exactly where Gary wanted me to be," Whitecalf said.

A Coalition of Helpers

Whitecalf's work earned him recognition as the 2026 NSEA Education Support Professional of the Year and, this summer, the 2026 Reg Weaver Memorial Award for Human and Civil Rights from the National Education Association.

For Whitecalf, the recognition is another opportunity to bring attention to student homelessness and find more people willing to help.

"I'm still looking for a whole bunch of people that are going to partner with me," he said.

Whitecalf believes lasting change cannot depend on one person. It takes educators who recognize when a student needs help, people willing to step in and others ready to carry the work forward.

"I think it takes a coalition of people that come together then to be the changemakers," he said.

No one person can remove every barrier facing every student. But every student can have someone. Whitecalf is looking for a whole coalition of them.



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BARGAINING WATCH: The Risks of Subcontracting

On a Wednesday afternoon in mid-June, NSEA members gathered in Gering for a STRONG Summer Conference. A roundtable on collective bargaining soon shifted to a growing concern: subcontracting.

Members talked about substitute teachers, paraprofessionals and other positions districts have turned or could turn over to private companies. While subcontracting is often presented as a solution to staffing shortages or budget pressures, members were asking different questions: What protections do employees have? What does it actually save? And what could it mean for students?

A Growing Issue

NSEA members in metro and rural districts are increasingly monitoring subcontracting proposals. NSEA Director of Advocacy Jason Wiese said subcontracted workers often lack the same benefits and protections as district employees, including access to the Nebraska Public Employees Retirement Systems and workplace protections available through NSEA.

“Subcontracting can look like a simple solution on paper, but local associations need to look beyond the

initial price tag. The real question is what a district may be giving up in return, from experienced employees and workplace protections to accountability and continuity for students.”

Cost savings may also be short-lived, as education associations across the country have found that contractors may offer lower initial rates to secure agreements, then increase those rates when contracts are renewed.

What's at Stake

Wiese has also found that subcontracting can blur accountability. While districts remain responsible for students and families, personnel decisions may shift to a private company, requiring concerns to be resolved through a contractor rather than directly with employees.

For students, subcontracting can affect the consistency of instruction and support they receive. In some cases, staffing shortages may be addressed through virtual instruction or outside providers rather than a district-employed educator in the classroom.

Longtime school employees build relationships with students

and families, understand the needs of their schools and carry valuable institutional knowledge from year to year. Frequent staffing changes can disrupt those connections and make it harder to provide consistent support. Many school employees also live in the communities they serve as neighbors, taxpayers and parents.

Nebraska is not alone. Education associations in states including New Jersey, Illinois and Pennsylvania have challenged outsourcing proposals by focusing on educational quality, accountability, employee retention and student learning.

What to Watch For

Watch school board agendas, budget discussions and staffing proposals for signs that outside contractors are being considered. Early awareness matters. If you learn or suspect subcontracting is being considered in your district, contact your NSEA organizational specialist as soon as possible or call NSEA at 800-742-0047. NSEA can help assess the proposal, identify potential impacts and determine next steps.

Legal Excellence Delivered



Scott Norby

Nick Welding

John Hunzeker

NSEA stands out as the only education association with legal counsel based in Nebraska. The attorneys at Norby Welding Hunzeker LLP are retained by NSEA to assist association members with legal issues arising from their employment. Specializing in education, employment and labor law, the firm has represented clients in thousands of administrative and judicial proceedings. With a statewide presence and a combined six decades of experience, attorneys Scott J. Norby, Nicholas J. Welding and Jonathan C. Hunzeker are dedicated advocates for association members. The firm is recognized as one of USA Today's Best Law Firms in Education Law.

Educator's Liability Policy Protection Available Online

Every member of the NSEA is covered by the Educator's Liability (EEL) insurance policy purchased by the National Education Association. No monthly insurance premium from members is required.

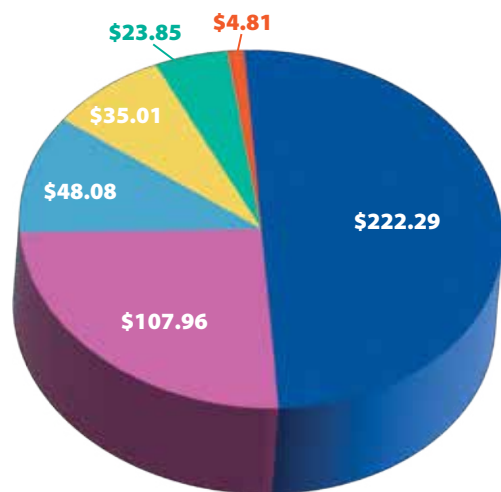
The policy provides \$3 million per member per occurrence for legal defense costs in non-civil rights claims; \$1 million in liability insurance per member per occurrence for non-civil right issues or claims; \$300,000 per member per occurrence for civil rights issues or claims; \$35,000 in attorney fee reimbursement for criminal proceedings; \$1,000 for bail bond; \$500 for assault-related personal property damage; and \$1 million per member per occurrence for claims involving medical and related acts.

Full EEL policy and details may be found at www.nsea.org/members-only.

The following occurrences should be reported immediately to the NSEA: any allegation or incident involving the death or injury of a student as a result of a school activity; the receipt of a notice of claim, lien letter from an attorney, or service of a summons or lawsuit; or any situation you believe to be covered by the EEL policy.

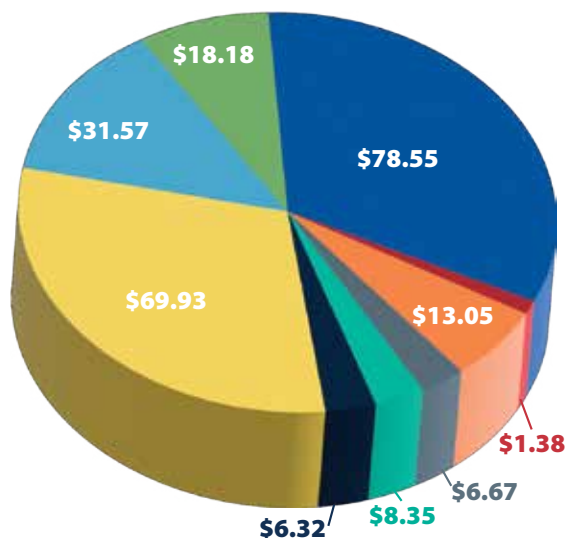
Do not contact an attorney to represent you before contacting NSEA headquarters at (402) 475-7611.

NSEA DUES BREAKDOWN 2026-27



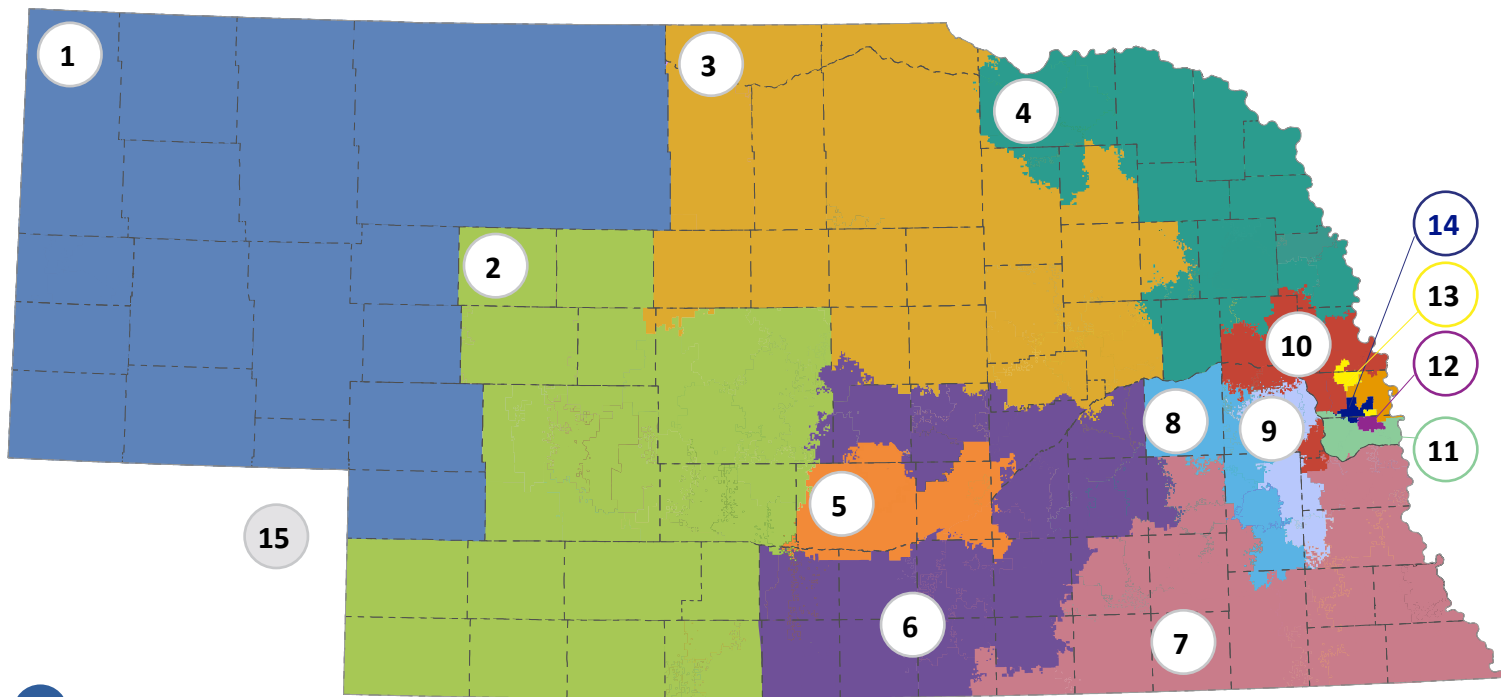
Advocacy & Collective Bargaining	\$222.29
GOAL: NSEA will advance the economic well- being and secure the contractual rights of our members. Expected outcomes include protection of collective bargaining rights, and an increase in the capacity of staff and members to promote member rights.	
Member Engagement	\$35.01
GOAL: NSEA will partner with national and local affiliates to strengthen our organizational capacity. Expected outcomes include strengthening of member engagement and offering professional development growth in the Association and the profession.	
Partnerships & Policy Engagement	\$48.08
GOAL: NSEA supports a public policy environment that promotes and protects public education. Expected outcomes include building and strengthening partnerships with external stakeholders and improving educator effectiveness in public policy engagement with candidates and elected officials.	
Governance	\$23.85
GOAL: The NSEA will support governance structures that are responsive to the needs of our membership. Expected outcomes include monitoring and adjusting Association governance structures across the state to increase member representation and to increase member engagement in NSEA leadership and governance.	
Social & Racial Justice	\$4.81
GOAL: NSEA will advance a culture of social and racial justice by improving educational opportunities for ALL students and by building respect for the worth, dignity and equality of every individual in our diverse society. Expected outcomes include establishment and promotion of an ongoing legislative agenda that advances human and civil rights and recruitment and retention of a diverse population of educators.	
Operations	\$107.96
GOAL: The NSEA will maintain sound financial practices and the corporate structure necessary to support a strong organization.	

NEA DUES BREAKDOWN 2026-27

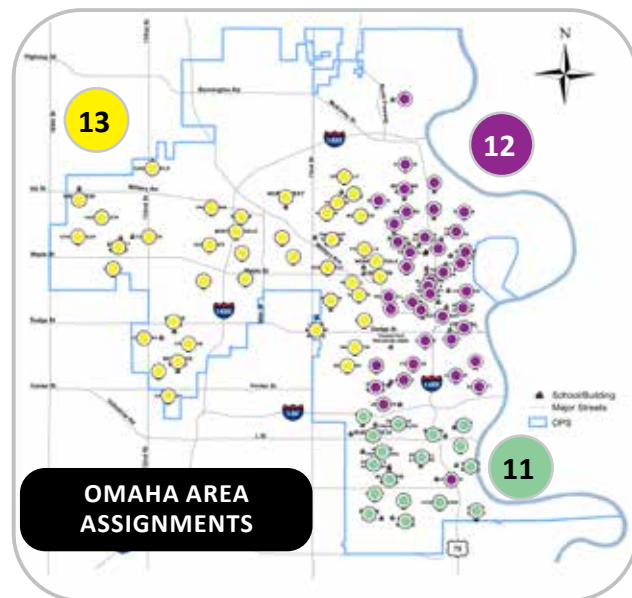


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| 7 SOUTHEAST | 15 STATEWIDE: HIGHER ED |
| 8 CAPITOL WEST | |



Exceptional support is always within reach. Organizational specialists are your front-line contacts.

Your NSEA Organizational Specialist is your front-line contact for workplace questions and concerns. Assigned to specific districts and buildings, they know your local, your contract and the issues educators face every day.

Organizational Specialists work with members at schools, ESUs and college campuses across Nebraska. Their knowledge of local districts, administrators, contracts and Nebraska school law allows them to

answer questions, address concerns and advocate for members when workplace issues arise.

They are also experienced bargainers who work with local associations to secure competitive salaries, benefits and working conditions. Contact your Organizational Specialist for help with:

- Plan time and extra duty pay;
- Salary schedule placement;
- Reduction in Force notices; and contract cancellations;

- Evaluation responses;
- Teaching assignments and certificate renewal;
- District policy questions;
- Grievances;
- Personal, sick, family and medical leave; and much more!

Find your Organizational Specialist and their contact information on these pages, scan the QR code on page 13 for an interactive map, or call NSEA at 800-742-0047.



1

Andrea Longoria
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(308) 765-2544
andrea.longoria@nsea.org



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3

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4

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Northeast Unit
402-713-9169
andy.isaacson@nsea.org



5

Kristen Sedlacek
Central Unit
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kristen.sedlacek@nsea.org



6

Cassie Eickhoff
South Central Unit
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cassie.eickhoff@nsea.org



7

Teresa Matthews
Southeast Unit
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teresa.matthews@nsea.org



8

Megan Lyons
Capitol West Unit
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megan.lyons@nsea.org



9

Travis Vo
Capitol East
402-417-0130
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10

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11

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15

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Statewide: Higher Ed Unit
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Org. Specialist Assoc. Staff
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Noah Snurr
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Angie Tasich
Org. Specialist Assoc. Staff
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Scan for
more:



NSEA Governance Team



Tim Royers
Millard
President '27
402-214-6948



Paul Schulte
Millard
Vice President, '29
402-516-2018



Edward Ventura Jr.
Omaha
NEA Director, '28
402-210-1655



Renae Noble
Chadron
Sec. Treas. '28
308-430-1904



Kathy Poehling
Omaha
Metro, '29
402-651-3555



Stacy Kester-Pearson
Millard
Metro, '27
402-415-3078



Sarah Dragon
Omaha
Metro, '28
402-612-1736



Terri Childers
Omaha
Metro, '28
402-658-3316



Stacy Johnson
Millard
Metro, '29
402-884-6879



Marsha Edquist
Millard
Metro President, '27
402-660-4282



Vanessa Brand
Oakland-Craig
Elkhorn, '27
402-619-8563



Matt McCarthy
Northeast CC
Elkhorn, '29
402-640-6795



Michele Brand
Norfolk
Elkhorn, '28
712-253-1278



Mackenzie Waltke
Norfolk
Elkhorn Pres. '29
402-841-3813



Dee Ann Roy
Valley Co.-Arcadia
Sandhills, '27
308-390-6136



Calvin Krogman
Isanti
Sandhills Pres., '29
605-202-1674



Bailey Smith
Eustis-Farnam
Tri-Valley, '27
308-325-9702



Karen Kloepping
Eustis-Farnam
Tri-Valley, '28
402-707-2159



Kenzie Mollring
North Platte
Tri-Valley, '29
402-301-9242



Ben Welsch
Hastings
Tri-Valley Pres., '27
402-826-9687



Andrew Lenzen
Western NE CC
Panhandle, '28
308-249-2530



Dash Rohan
Sioux County
Panhandle Pres., '29
402-646-5381



Megan Simsic
Lincoln
Capitol, '27
402-314-7363



Jake Jolliffe
Lincoln
Capitol, '28
308-660-3566



Nicole Lopez-Bettendorf
Lincoln
Capitol, '28
210-912-1861



Ross Pickel
Lincoln
Capitol, '29
402-601-5660



Julie Colby
Lincoln
Capitol Pres., '28
402-890-5913



John Heineman
Lincoln
NSEA-Retired, '29
402-416-2326



Nora Lenz
Lincoln
EMAC, '27
402-467-2983



Kristi Rastede
Northeast CC
Higher Ed, '27
605-670-1045



Mary Reynolds-East
South Sioux City
ESP, '28
402-651-5748



Makenna Benson-Berger
Wayne State College
Aspiring Ed, '29
712 204-3767

DISTRICT OFFICERS

These members have been elected to lead NSEA at the District level:

■ Metro District

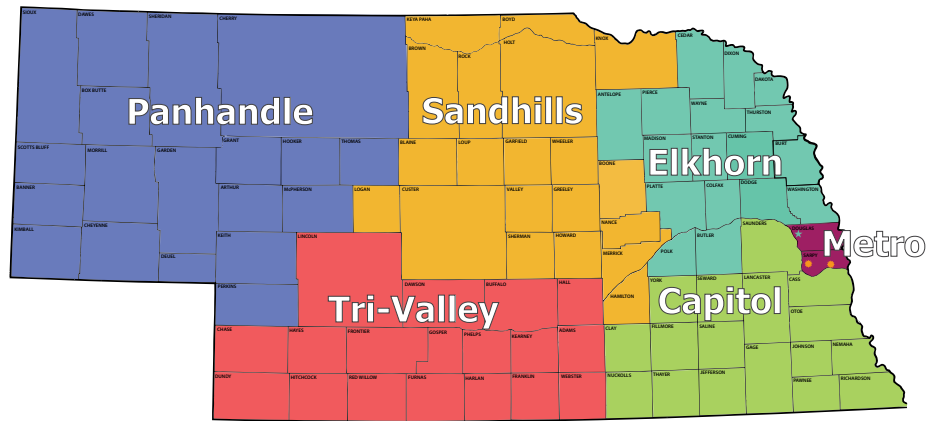
President Marsha Edquist, Millard
 Vice Pres Stacie Stevens, Omaha
 Treasurer Carrie Pratt, Omaha
 Secretary Julie Adams, Bellevue
 Exec Comm Audra Gibbons Omaha
 Jacob Goetz, Bellevue
 Michelle Richards, Omaha
 Amy Smith, Omaha
 Kelli LeMay, Millard
 Emily Mildenberger, Millard
 Gail Sherrell, Papillion La Vista
 Carla Bobier, Bellevue
 Judith Stucky, Westside
 Rosey Krauel, DC West

■ Elkhorn District

President MacKenzie Waltke, Norfolk
 Vice Pres ... Kristi Rastede, Northeast CC
 Sec./Treas..... Lisa Hanson, Neligh-Oakdale
 Exec Comm..... Stacy Brasch, Winnebago
 Carrie Sheppard, Battle Creek
 Brooke Hemmer, ESU #7
 Jerrett Mills, Northeast CC
 Abigail Robinson, Battle Creek
 Sophie Hermelbracht, East Butler

■ Sandhills District

President Dr. Calvin Krogman, Santee
 Vice Pres..... Whitney Hake, Palmer
 Treasurer Becky Meyer, Palmer



In order to comply with NEA guidelines, the ■ Gretna Education Association and ■ Springfield/Platteview Education Association will be included in Capitol District, and ■ Metro Community College Education Association is included in Elkhorn District.

Secretary Mandy Evans, Ainsworth
 Exec Comm.....Mindy Conner, Arcadia
 Mary Gregoski, Palmer
 Two vacancies

■ Capitol District

President Julie Colby, Lincoln
 Vice Pres.....Shari Anderson, Lincoln
 Treasurer Deana Kumpf, Lincoln
 Secretary Kate Regler, Lincoln
 Exec Comm..... Winona Mitchell Milford
 Carolyn Enevoldsen, Raymond Central
 Two vacancies

■ Tri-Valley District

President Ben Welsch, Hastings
 Vice Pres..... Brenda McKenzie, Hastings

Treasurer Angie Dickey, Trenton
 Secretary Holly Ortega, Grand Island
 Exec Comm....Brian Whitecalf, Grand Island
 Abby Brehm, Hastings
 Joshua Holden, Lexington
 Judy Henning, UNK
 Nicole Bruck, North Platte
 Robin Henrichs, McCook

■ Panhandle District

President Dash Rohan, Sioux County
 Vice Pres..... Vacant
 Treasurer Matt Chrisman, Mitchell
 Secretary Jessica Foland, Scottsbluff
 Exec Comm..... Sarah Salinas, Scottsbluff
 Five vacancies

AN EXPERIENCED TEAM OF LEADERS

Your Voice. Your Representation. Your NSEA Board.

Your NSEA Board of Directors is made up of a diverse group of dedicated educators who represent communities and school districts of every size across Nebraska. These individuals include classroom teachers, coaches, higher education faculty, education support professionals and others who work every day in public education. Their wide-ranging experiences give them a deep and practical understanding of the needs and challenges within Nebraska's schools, making them exceptionally qualified to represent, serve and advocate on behalf of all NSEA members.

A Representative Democracy

NSEA operates as a representative democracy. Every member has an equal voice, and every member has equal representation within the association. Every Nebraska school building has an association/faculty representative. They work with members in their building and connect to the elected officers of the districtwide local association. Each local association is found in one of six NSEA governance districts. Each governance district has a board of directors, and each district is represented on the NSEA Board of Directors, with each board member representing a roughly equal number of members. NSEA board members are chosen in online elections in late winter each year. Any

association member in good standing is encouraged to seek election to their NSEA district board or the statewide board of directors.

The Executive Committee

NSEA President Tim Royers, Vice President Paul Schulte, Nebraska NEA Director Edward Ventura Jr. and Secretary/Treasurer Renae Noble comprise the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors. NSEA elects one Nebraska representative to serve a three-year term on the National Education Association Board of Directors.

Delegate Assembly

In addition, members from every local association are eligible to seek election to serve as a representative to the NSEA Delegate Assembly. At that annual April business meeting, more than 200 delegates from across the state elect officers, set the association's agenda for the coming year, craft the association's foundational resolutions and review and update the bylaws, which guide association operations.

In every effort, members lead and pave the way forward on behalf of the children who attend our schools and in support of quality public education. For more details, email President Royers at tim.royers@nsea.org.



Representation for All in Education

NSEA includes six membership groups that support and enhance the association's mission. These groups provide essential perspectives on policy decisions and contribute to the profession's stability. See below for details on each membership group. For details, call NSEA at 800-742-0047.

Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee

For more than 40 years, the Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee has represented minority members on the NSEA Board of Directors. EMAC promotes respect and understanding of minority groups and seeks to maintain compliance with NEA and NSEA goals for increased minority participation, training and leadership.

The EMAC Executive Committee consists of officers and two representatives each from these groups: Black, Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native and Asian/Pacific Islander. All members, regardless of ethnicity, may participate in EMAC activities and may attend committee meetings.

Higher Education Affairs Committee

Since 2006, the NSEA Higher Education Affairs Committee has facilitated communication between NSEA higher education associations and members, supported and promoted NSEA in a comprehensive and unified way and developed outreach and recruitment efforts for higher education faculty, academic professionals and higher education support professionals across Nebraska.

NSEA-Retired

Founded in 1985, NSEA-Retired has played a key role in lobbying the Nebraska Legislature, leading to reduced and now eliminated state income taxes on Social Security benefits.

Membership is open to those 45 and older who are eligible for a Nebraska school employee retirement plan, or to those

from other states with at least five years of qualifying service. Active members under 45 may join as "pre-retired."

Education Support Professionals Committee

The ESP Committee represents paraprofessionals, sign language interpreters, secretaries, bus drivers, cafeteria workers and other non-certificated education employees. The committee seeks to improve the standing of those school employees and works to improve membership and opportunities for these employees through the NSEA Board and statewide conferences.

NSEA Aspiring Educators

Aspiring Educators provides future educators with resources, professional development and the full range of NSEA support and benefits.

Along with local chapter meetings at 16 Nebraska colleges and universities, annual highlights include the fall and spring conferences, a Delegate Assembly modeled after the NSEA Delegate Assembly and the NEA Aspiring Educators conference.

New Generation of Educators in Nebraska

NSEA's NewGEN committee represents the new generation of educators in Nebraska. The group is composed of early-career educators who are in their first seven years of teaching. NewGEN believes in the power of uniting and supporting early-career educators through association membership and engagement. Its mission is to drive early-career educators toward success through professional development and mentoring opportunities.

NewGEN focuses on creating a network of educators who are facing the same challenges and providing resources and connections to help them find solutions for time management, stress, lesson planning, classroom management, teacher-parent interactions and honing their teaching skills.



Isau Metes
Executive Director,
7 years



Shauna Benjamin-Brice
Associate Executive Director,
2 years

A Dedicated Team Working for Members

Your NSEA staff is a team of professionals with expertise in member rights, advocacy, bargaining, membership, legislative research, communications and technology. Their work provides members with the knowledge, resources and support they need throughout their careers.

Leading the NSEA's day-to-day work are Executive Director Isau Metes and Associate Executive Director Shauna Benjamin-Brice, alongside NSEA's governance team.

Program directors and associate staff provide support across the organization, from helping members navigate workplace issues and advocating at the Capitol to developing resources, strengthening local associations and growing membership. Their specialized knowledge helps NSEA respond to the needs of members while advancing the education profession and the cause of public education. Together, they share a commitment to Nebraska's educators, students and public schools.



Jennifer Rieken
Director of Business Services,
3 years



Michaela Habe
Director of Accounting,
3 years



Chris Garcia
Assist. to Associate Executive Director,
3 years



Martha Livingston
Assistant to President,
9 years



Nicole Jacobsen
Receptionist, Assist. to Exec. Director,
5 years



Cassie Ivy
Dir. Public Affairs, Communications,
2 years



Kristi Capek
Visual Comms & Digital Engagement,
26 years



Kelsey Foley
Multimedia Comms Specialist,
8 years



Tim Lassen
Dir. of Information Technology,
4 years



Jason Wiese
Director of Advocacy,
5 years



Saoirse Langlois
Advocacy Associate,
5 years



Jason Hayes
Dir. Public Policy & Leg. Research,
14 years



Brian Mikkelsen
Director, Political Field Operations,
29 years



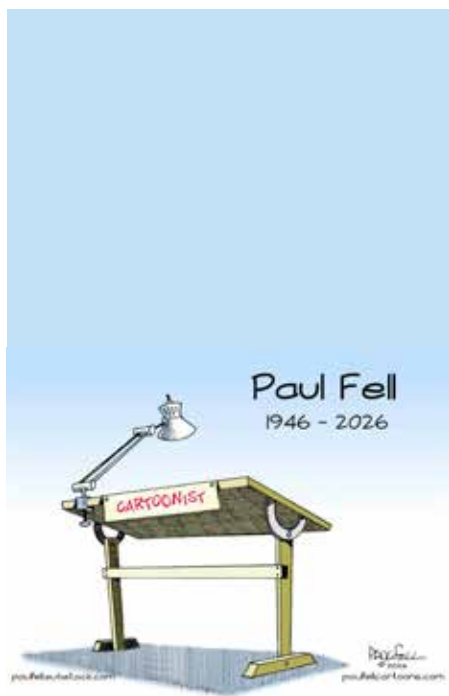
Eamonn Leahy
Govt. Relations, Political Field Ops Assoc.,
2 years



Teresa Greve
Membership, Data Analyst Assoc.,
17 years



Karen Hunt
Accounting, Membership Assoc.,
19 years



Fell

Paul Henry Fell, longtime educator, editorial cartoonist and contributor to *The Voice*, died June 28 at age 80.

Fell attended Peru State College and played football. The Massachusetts

native made Nebraska his lifelong home and built a career that combined education, art and journalism.

Fell taught high school art and coached in Auburn before serving as a college art professor. He later became editorial cartoonist and newsroom artist for the former *Lincoln Journal*, a position he held from 1984 to 1992. Following the elimination of that position, he launched Paul Fell Cartoons, a freelance cartooning and illustration business that served newspapers, media organizations and NSEA publications. His illustrations and cartoons became familiar to Nebraska educators, bringing humor, insight and a distinctive artistic voice to issues affecting public education. Alongside his career as a cartoonist, Fell taught in the art department at the University of Nebraska at Kearney, where he shared his expertise and perspective with a new generation of artists. He often said he was grateful to make a living doing what he loved most: drawing.



A Stellar Experience: Teacher of the Year Participates in Space Camp

Sarah Hardin, the 2026 Nebraska Teacher of the Year and Mullen Education Association member, attended Space Camp in Alabama in July. She rode the Multi-Axis Trainer, which simulates the disorientation astronauts may experience during an uncontrolled spacecraft tumble; drove a Mars rover during a simulated

mission; tackled STEM challenges with Team Arnold, including rocket building and a Mars lander egg drop; and spoke with a NASA docent. Hardin plans to use her Space Camp experiences to encourage students to explore science through experimentation, discovery and real-world connections.

Wright named UNK 2026 Gary Thomas Distinguished Music Alumna Award

Kearney Education Association member Angela Wright has been selected as the 2026 Gary Thomas Distinguished Music Alumna Award recipient by the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

The award recognizes outstanding UNK music alumni whose careers have made a lasting impact on music education and the communities they serve.

For 24 years, Wright has inspired Kearney Public Schools students as a K-5 music specialist, helping young learners discover the joy of music while fostering creativity and confidence. She began her teaching career at Sumner-Eddyville-Miller Public Schools before teaching at Kearney Public Schools.

Wright will be honored during the 46th Annual UNK Distinguished Alumni Awards Luncheon on Oct. 2 as part of the university's Homecoming celebration.

Wright serves as president of the Nebraska Music Education Association and has provided leadership through workshops, honor choirs, music festivals and mentoring opportunities for educators across the state. She also serves on the boards of the Kearney Concert Association and Handbell Musicians of America Area 8-Nebraska, directs the Platte River Children's Chorale, and leads church choir and handbell ensembles in Kearney.



Wright



STRONG Conferences Takes Member Learning to All Corners of Nebraska

NSEA continued its shift in member engagement this summer with STRONG, a series of six regional conferences that brought professional learning and leadership development closer to members across Nebraska.

Held in St. Paul, Lexington, Neligh, Omaha, Firth and Gering, the conferences marked a move away from a single statewide event and reflected member feedback calling for more accessible opportunities to connect, learn and grow. The regional format reduced travel barriers while giving members more opportunities to build relationships with educators and local leaders in their part of the state.

STRONG offered something for members at every stage of their leadership journey. Sessions covered leadership development, collective bargaining, advocacy, communications, professional growth and other topics designed to strengthen local associations and help members become more effective advocates for their colleagues, students and public schools.

By taking STRONG on the road, NSEA was able to meet members where they are and create space for conversations grounded in the different experiences of educators and communities across Nebraska.



Welcome Weekend Builds AE Leaders

NSEA Aspiring Educators (AE) from across Nebraska gathered at headquarters in Lincoln for Welcome Weekend, an annual event to prepare student leaders for the year ahead.

Held Aug. 29, the event brought together AE members, chapter officers and advisors for a day of leadership development, networking and planning. Participants began with introductions and an overview of NSEA governance and staff before hearing from NSEA President Tim Royers.

Officer training gave participants time to learn more about their roles and connect with others serving in similar positions. NSEA staff led conversations on political action and issues at the Nebraska Legislature, membership development and goal setting. Members also heard from NSEA Executive Director Isau Metes.

The event served as a launching point for the year, helping AE members build relationships, strengthen their chapters and develop leadership skills they will carry into the education profession.

Member Benefits

Did You Know You Can Access Your EHA Benefits in One Convenient App?

Managing your health benefits just got easier. As an Educators Health Alliance (EHA) member, you have access to the myEHA app, a convenient tool that brings important plan information and resources together in one place. Instead of searching through multiple websites or documents, you can access many of the benefits and services included with your coverage right from your mobile device.

The myEHA app is designed to help members stay connected to their health plan and make the most of their benefits. The app provides quick access to information about your coverage, resources available through your plan, and tools that support your overall health and well-being. Whether you're looking for benefit information, wellness resources or member services, the myEHA app helps put what you need at your fingertips.

Having easy access to plan information can help you make informed decisions about your care and feel more confident navigating your health benefits. The app is especially helpful when you're away from home and need quick access to important information. With everything organized in one convenient location, managing your health coverage becomes simpler and more efficient.

The myEHA app is just one of the many ways EHA is working to make healthcare easier and more accessible for members.

To learn more about the myEHA app and other valuable EHA benefits, visit www.NebraskaBlue.com/EHABenefits.



nea Member Benefits

WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

One of the most vital benefits of your NSEA membership is the no-cost life insurance available to all members through NEA Member Benefits.

The NEA Complimentary Life Insurance is part of membership at no cost to Active, Reserve and Lifetime NEA members. Eligible members can take advantage of up to \$1,000 in term life insurance and:

- Up to \$5,000 in accidental death/dismemberment coverage;
- Up to \$50,000 in accidental death insurance for covered accidents occurring on the job or while serving as an Association leader; and
- Up to \$150,000 in accidental death benefits for eligible members who are victims of death by homicide while at work.

All members should register a beneficiary at www.neamb.com/teachers-insurance.

Access exclusive benefits that can improve your financial wellbeing

1.5M+

members save on travel, shopping, dining and entertainment

50K+ members

receive an average of

\$39K

in student loan debt forgiveness



Enter the
NEA Member Benefits Annual Giveaway!



As a member, did you know you have special access to sweepstakes giveaways throughout the year?

ENTER THE SWEEPSTAKES:

neamb.com/sweepstakes

Register Today to Get Started!

nea Member Benefits



ISAU METES

Message from the Executive Director

Until All the Children Are Well

I have always loved the first days of school. There is a spark of energy, excitement and joy. Looking back through my old school photos, I can see that a younger version of myself felt that same sense of anticipation, too. As an educator, I experienced those same feelings, along with nervousness and anxiety, but there was always a sense of promise. I am a lifelong learner and educator.

Pushing Forward

I love the work I get to do on behalf of 23,000 members, and, just like in the classroom, it can be hard. Some days are especially hard, even painful. Yet the energy, joy and promise are what keep people in education. They help us move past the nervousness and anxiety.

Occasionally, though, joy and promise can seem impossible. Have you ever felt like you cannot do anything right for anyone? Whether it is students, parents, colleagues, administrators, school board members, legislators or the community at large, there are times when you need to take a breath or perhaps put your head down on your desk and cry. We have all had moments like this.

Being an educator is a calling. Something inside us pushes past those dark moments. Many of us have dried our tears and then gone right to practice, rehearsal, bus duty or another extracurricular activity or extra duty. In those moments, we call on our “why.” For me, and I suspect for many educators, that “why” has always come back to the children.

How Are the Children

When it feels impossible to do right by everyone, perhaps the better question is whether we, as a community, are doing right by our children. After all, the well-being

of children has long been a measure of the strength and health of a community. I recently came across a traditional warrior greeting often attributed to the Maasai people that really resonated with me. It put words to how I was able to push through difficult moments throughout my career. It is simple yet powerful. The greeting is “Kasserian Ingera?” which roughly translates to “And how are the children?” The traditional response, “Sepati Ingera,” roughly translates to “All the children are well.”

What stayed with me was the idea of strength and courage being connected to the well-being of children and, in turn, the well-being of the entire community.

That greeting centers me in this work. A large body of research shows that children’s educational outcomes are shaped by many environmental factors. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs reminds us that meeting basic needs creates a foundation for learning. Children do not get to choose where they are born or which of their needs will be met.

Most days are joyful and full of promise. But when I am faced with a hard conversation or when classroom management goes off the rails, I remind myself to breathe, cry if necessary and then get back to work because not all children are well.

When I can call on my “why,” which is the children, I can move mountains. It gives me the courage to advocate for what is right. Whether I am in the classroom or standing alongside President Royers and NSEA members across the state, I will hold true to NSEA’s vision: A great public education for every student. Until the day we can say, “All the children are well,” I will continue doing this work.

“

“When I can call on my ‘why,’ which is the children, I can move mountains.”

”



October

22



Museum of Nebraska Art to Host NSEA-Retired Fall Conference

NSEA-Retired members will gather at the Museum of Nebraska Art (MONA) in Kearney for this year's Fall Conference. MONA provides a unique setting to explore Nebraska's artistic heritage and the people, places and stories that have shaped the state's culture.

The museum is home to a collection of works by artists with ties to Nebraska, offering visitors an opportunity to experience the state's history and culture through art. NSEA-Retired members will have time to explore the museum while enjoying a day of learning, conversation and connection with fellow retirees from across the state.

This year's NSEA-Retired Fall Conference is scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 22, at the Museum of Nebraska Art, 2401 Central Ave., Kearney. The event is free for all NSEA-Retired members, and guests are welcome to attend for just \$10.

Don't miss this opportunity to connect with fellow retirees, learn from insightful speakers and immerse yourself in the art and stories showcased at MONA. To register, visit www.nsea.org/nsea-retired-fall.

NSEA-RETIRED
✓ **ELECTIONS**

NSEA-Retired Seeks Input on Voting Options

The NSEA-Retired Board of Directors would like your feedback regarding elections! A member survey will be conducted to gather input on voting methods for future NSEA-Retired elections. Currently, elections are conducted by mail using paper ballots. Voting members receive a ballot and a postage-paid envelope for returning their ballot.

On Sept. 8, members will receive an email survey through SurveyMonkey asking whether they prefer to continue using mailed paper ballots or would be interested in participating in elections electronically by email. In the event that the Board decides to proceed with electronic voting, members who do not have email addresses on file will receive a postcard with a website and QR code to vote online.

The Board encourages all members to complete the survey and share their preferences. Member feedback will help inform future discussions about NSEA-Retired election voting options.

NSEA-Retired Delegates Take Their Voice to Denver



NSEA-Retired delegates represented Nebraska at two national gatherings in Denver this summer.

Retired educators from across the country gathered for the 2026 NEA-Retired Annual Meeting to conduct association business, elect new leaders and celebrate continued membership growth. OEA-Retired also received national recognition for its newsletter.

At the NEA Representative Assembly, NSEA-Retired delegates debated and adopted policies, ensuring Nebraska's educators had a voice in decisions shaping NEA and public education.

While in Denver, delegates also made time for a little fun with a visit to Casa Bonita.



Teachers' Night: Oct. 2

The Durham Museum in Omaha will host its annual Teachers' Night from 4 to 7 p.m. Friday, Oct. 2.

This event invites educators to take part in a resource fair designed to support classroom instruction. Representatives from regional cultural and educational institutions will offer free classroom-ready materials. Educators can also learn about field trips and educational programs available in their subject areas. NSEA proudly sponsors this event.

Participants will have the opportunity to enjoy complimentary food and prizes while exploring the museum's exhibits. This evening is free of charge to educators across all grade levels and subject areas. For additional details and to register for the event, please visit the museum's website at durhammuseum.org/teachers-night.



For the 17th year, the Ag Sack Lunch Program will offer Nebraska fourth graders an opportunity to learn about agriculture through in-person and virtual presentations.

The in-person program provides students visiting the Nebraska State Capitol with a free lunch featuring Nebraska-produced foods and a 25-minute lesson on the role agriculture plays in the state's economy, including crops and livestock raised in Nebraska. Students also receive a deck of cards featuring agriculture facts.

Classrooms not planning a Capitol visit can participate virtually, with the same interactive presentation and agriculture fact cards.

Reservations can be made online by visiting agsacklunchprogram.com.



NSEA VOTER CENTER

The NSEA Voter Center is your one-stop resource for important voting information. Whether you need to register to vote, check your registration, find your polling place or request an early voting ballot, you'll find the resources you need to be ready to make your voice heard.

[REGISTER TO VOTE](#)
[CHECK VOTER REGISTRATION](#)
[WHERE TO VOTE](#)

REQUEST AN EARLY VOTING BALLOT

Select your county to download the appropriate Early Voting Ballot Request Form. You may submit this form if you wish to request a ballot for early voting. You do not need to complete this form if you have already requested a ballot for early voting for this election. Applications must be printed and physically signed.

— Select Your County —

Election 2026: Make Your Voice Heard. Plan Now to Vote.

From your local school board to the state Legislature, elected officials make decisions that directly affect Nebraska educators, students and public schools, from salaries and benefits to class sizes, school funding and working conditions.

NSEA helps members make informed choices through its candidate recommendation process. NSEA members review candidates' responses to education-related questions, interview participating candidates and make recommendations based on issues affecting public education.

Make a plan to vote. Vote early in person, vote early by mail or cast your ballot on Election Day. Request an early voting ballot and see NSEA's recommended candidates at www.nsea.org/vote2026.

Win WNBA School visit with Read Across America

Public school educators can enter for a chance to win a free school visit from WNBA legend, author and Read Across America Ambassador Helen Darling. The visit is part of NEA's year-round Read Across America celebration and will feature a high-energy literacy experience designed to show students that reading is a game everyone can play. NEA's Read Across America will cover all costs, including travel, related expenses and books for students. Entries are limited to one per educator. The deadline is Sept. 29. The winning school will be chosen at random and announced Sept. 30. Find more information at www.nea.org/win-school-visit-wnba-legend-helen-darling.



Free STEM Resource Available through NDE



Nebraska public schools can access Plasma Games, a science resource for grades 6-12, at no cost during the 2026-27 school year through funding from the Nebraska Department of Education. The platform includes interactive activities, hands-on investigations, auto-graded assignments and STEM career experiences. Free professional development is also included. To participate, a principal or district administrator must complete an approval form at www.bit.ly/Plasma-Admin. Plasma Games will then assist with account setup. Learn more at <https://play.plasma.games>.

Mailed By:



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Have Your Contact Details Changed?

Have you moved? Are you planning to move? Has your name changed? If so, you can update your NSEA membership information online.

To do so, log on to www.nsea.org and click on the 'For Members' on the top right side of the home page.

Then click on the blue 'Member Update' button in the center of the next screen, and follow directions. Keep your issue of *The Voice* near, as the mailing label includes your membership number, used to access your information.

No REDTAPE, Just Help: How the Children's Fund Supports Kids in Need



Where there is a child in need, there is likely a teacher willing to help by opening their wallet. Teachers frequently spend their own hard-earned dollars to help these children. But a teacher can't assist every child encountered during the school day, much less during the school year. That is why NSEA created the Children's Fund. Since 1994, donations to the Children's Fund have provided hundreds of thousands of dollars to help children in need.

The generosity of Children's Fund donors has helped to pay for glasses,

warm clothing, medical and dental needs of children; provide assistance to a family whose home and belongings were destroyed by fire; purchase a bus ticket for a child with no other means to get to school; and more.

Local associations are encouraged to brainstorm fundraising ideas; to challenge other local associations; to collect change; host a jeans day fundraiser; or consider other ways to contribute toward the fund.

There is never any red tape or lengthy delay for members wanting to use the fund to help a student. A call to Karen Hunt at the NSEA (800-742-0047) is usually all that is needed. For more information, visit nsea.org/childrensfund.

NEW LOOK

Beginning with the October issue, *The Voice* will arrive in your mailbox folded and tabbed rather than in its traditional mailing format. This small change will help NSEA reduce mailing costs while continuing to bring members the same great content, stories and information in every issue. The magazine may look a little different when it arrives, but inside, it's still the same *The Voice* you know.