

2011 LEGISLATURE
STARTS

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NORTH DAKOTA

education news

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www.ndea.org



**'BULLYING
HURTS
EVERYONE'**



president's post



▲ NDEA President Dakota Draper

ALL of North Dakota would pay a heavy price if defined benefit or our current DB plan were to be ended; but most of all it would fall upon our young people.

'Lessons Learned'

Retirement should be a reward for a life's work. In order for it to be rewarding your retirement funds must be safe and secure to retire. One should not have to fret about if they will have enough to get through the remaining days of his/her life, but should enjoy retirement with family and friends. That is why providing retirement security is the right thing to do. The best way to provide retirement security is to ensure that retirees have strong defined benefit retirement plans. Defined benefit (DB) plans are much better for employees, employers, and the state in which they reside than defined contribution (DC) plans. DB plans provide a consistent and stable stream of retirement income until death, while DC plans only provide income until the individual's funds run out.

After much discussion, the Employee Benefits Committee unanimously passed some adjustments to shore up the Teacher's Fund for Retirement (TFFR). This bill was just recently assigned the number HB 1134 in the 2011 North Dakota Legislative Assembly. This is a very important piece of legislation for all North Dakotans as it seeks to provide a safe and secure retirement for the educators of our state by rebuilding TFFR. The purpose of this column is to make the case for DB over DC because DB is good for all of North Dakotans and to call you to action to make sure HB 1134 passes as it is currently written.

In preparation for our North Dakota Legislative Session, I came across something of interest. Right now, there are only four purely defined contribution plans in the country serving educators, the rest of the country's educators (83 percent) are in defined benefit plans. Two of these DC plans are in Alaska, one in Washington DC, and the fourth was in West Virginia (notice the past tense).

The following is from a West Virginia retirement system website:

In 1991, the West Virginia Teachers Retirement System closed its defined benefit (DB) plan to new members and started a defined contribution (DC) plan for new members and members of the DB plan who wanted to switch.

Over time, many members became dissatisfied with the performance of their DC accounts. In 2005, the state closed the DC plan and reopened the DB plan for new members.

With a little bit of digging, I quickly came across two reasons why "members became dissatisfied" with the DC plan and why the state government of West Virginia decided to return its educators to a defined benefit plan.

The first reason has to do with what started happening to retirees of the DC system. An actuary for West Virginia's state retirement board reported in 2005, "Unless you have a structured, guaran-

teed payout (like a DB plan), people tend to retire and run out of money. On the average 20 to 30 percent in a DC plan can manage their investments successfully. Once unsuccessful investors (the other 70 to 80 percent) retire, the state often has to provide welfare and Medicaid benefits to them because they were unable to save enough to provide themselves with adequate pensions." In other words, the vast majority of educators in the DC plan who spent their careers teaching the children of West Virginia retire only to become a "ward of the state" in their retirement.

Interestingly, North Dakota at one time did have a DC plan for its public employees. In 1966, the North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System (PERS) began as a DC plan. But because of the inadequate benefits and the increased costs to the state taking care of retired public employees, North Dakota changed over to a DB plan in 1977, just like West Virginia did in 2005. The obvious conclusion is that DC plans didn't work in the late 60's and early 70's, they didn't work in West Virginia in the 90's, and they won't work in North Dakota now. DC plans are simply not designed to be effective in providing for a safe and secure retirement, as they were only first designed to provide a tax shelter for more wealthy individuals.

The second reason was actually recently provided to the North Dakota Legislative Employees Program Benefit Committee, as it also played out previously in West Virginia.

When a DB plan is closed to new hires, in turn it also closes off a major source of revenue to those already in the plan. Any DB plan needs contributions from those working to extend benefits for those retired. Take away the contributions of the new hires and the fund is further depleted, making it go broke even faster. And since the state owes an obligation to those vested in the system, the price tag is high and quick to come.

West Virginia learned this lesson the hard way when it finally realized what it had done. To avoid a crushing bill and/or unfairly ending benefits for educator retirees, the West Virginia Legislature voted in 2005 to return the state educators to a defined benefit plan. According to actuarial figures, this single move actually saved the state of West Virginia about \$1.5 billion.

Recently in North Dakota, the Legislative Employees Program Benefit Committee was informed of the similar undesired results if North Dakota closed off the DB plan to new hires. The actuaries reported to the committee that if the North Dakota Legislature were to do this, the State of North Dakota would experience more than a doubling of the shortfall in the fund. According to the testimony of the actuarial

to the committee, "[The bill placing new hires into a DC plan, rather than TFFR] leaves the DB plan with a projected shortfall of \$888 million with no funding source, more than double the [already projected] \$423 million shortfall." In essence, it would be West Virginia all over again.

Here's an important point for all of us to remember, removing new hires from TFFR and placing them into a DC plan, is bad for all of us -- vested and already retired teachers, new hires just beginning their career, and all the citizens of North Dakota. It places the future of TFFR at great risk and who is to pay that risk is a great question.

If we do one thing in 2011, we need to save DB for the next generation of North Dakota educators. Somebody earlier did it for us, and now it's our turn. In this, we must not fail. ALL of North Dakota would pay a heavy price if defined benefit or our current DB plan were to be ended; but most of all it would fall upon our young people. And by our young people I mean BOTH our new hires ready to begin teaching in North Dakota and the students we have in our classroom. It is important to all of North Dakota to have a safe and secure retirement.

The bill forcing new hires into the DC plan has now been introduced as HB1258. We need to work hard to defeat this bill. We will need all members, both current and future, to overcome this piece of legislation.

Also, we will need all members to work hard for the passage of HB 1134, the bill being forwarded by the TFFR Board of Directors, with the input and support of many different groups including the NDEA. This is the bill that would raise contributions four percent for both employers and employees over the next two biennia, adjust the age a teacher can retire with a ten-year grandfather period, and make other changes. These modifications to our TFFR pension plan will fall most heavily on us educators, regrettably some more than others, but in the end will provide a safe and secure retirement to North Dakota's teachers.

Let no one try to persuade you that we are asking for a handout or a free ride with HB 1134. But instead, let them know that we are committed to do what we must in order to keep our defined benefit pension plan solvent and strong well into the future. We believe we are more than doing our part with HB 1134.

The stakes are enormous and of great consequence not only for ourselves, but for our state as well. Members of the NDEA the time is NOW to make it happen. Start letting your legislators know today, tomorrow, and until they listen with both ears. Go to www.ndea.org/ppp to start. Let's make some history, not repeat it.

perspectives



▲ NDEA Executive Director
Greg Burns

The purpose of the legislation is to improve instructional practice, improve educational outcomes, attract and retain highly effective educators, create a compensation system that is related to what teachers do, and to provide quality assurance to the public and policymakers.

'ND Commission on Education Improvement Completes Its Work'

On Thursday, December 30, the ND Commission on Education Improvement met to review the final bill draft of the Commission's work and recommendations. Once again the Commission has provided the Legislative Assembly with proposed legislation that is far-reaching and worthy of passage. But before I go any further I would like to commend all of the members of the Commission for their hard work and dedication to improving education in North Dakota. All of the Commission members pitched in with great thought and dedication in crafting the components of this proposed legislation. Governor Jack Dalrymple chaired the Commission (He was originally designated Commission Chair in his previous role as Lt. Governor) and he proved once again, that he is a facilitator without peer. His ability to guide the Commission members' varied and sometimes divergent opinions to consensus cannot be over emphasized.

The voting members of the Commission were Governor Dalrymple, Jeff Lind (Superintendent, Rugby), Rick Buresh (Superintendent, Fargo), Representative Rae Ann Kelsch (House Education Committee Chair), Wayne Sandstead (Superintendent, DPI), Wayne Kutzer (Director and Executive Officer, CTE), Jim Gross (Superintendent, Selfridge), Senator Robert Erberle, Senator David Rust, Senator David O'Connell (Senate Majority Leader), and Representative David Rust. In addition to me, non-voting members were Doug Johnson (Executive Director, NDCEL), Jon Martinson (Executive Director, NDSBA), Joe Rothschilder (President and COO, Steffes Corporation), Father James Shea (President, University of Mary), and Bill Goetz (Chancellor, ND University System). NDEA President Dakota Draper was also present at all of the Commission meetings.

I would like to highlight a few of the many important items covered in this proposed legislation. The per student payment will increase about \$100.00 each year of the biennium. The require-

ment for allocating at least 70 percent of this amount to teacher compensation will remain. Funding will remain in place for the teacher mentoring program, now designated as the North Dakota Teacher Support System. Funding is recommended for a new Principal Mentoring System, and the Professional Development Advisory Committee is funded for the next biennium.

However, the centerpiece of the Commission recommendations to the Legislative Assembly is the proposal for a new teacher compensation system. Previously this has been called the Alternative Teacher Compensation System but in the proposed bill it will be called the Supplemental Teacher Effectiveness Compensation Plan (STEC-P). The story of how this rather ungainly title came into being is too complex to share here, but it is important to note that it is not called Pay for Performance, Merit Pay or Bonus Pay, names which would not do justice to the plan and also which conjure up negative connotations that might inhibit participation.

Commission members came to agreement that the secret to student success is to have a qualified and highly effective teacher in the classroom. The purpose of the legislation is to improve instructional practice, improve educational outcomes, attract and retain highly effective educators, create a compensation system that is related to what teachers do, and to provide quality assurance to the public and policymakers. The legislation requires that a new system of compensation should be based upon multiple measures of effectiveness, but the four primary areas to be included in successful plans are: pay for additional knowledge and skills, pay for added professional responsibilities, pay for hard-to-staff positions or sites and pay for student growth. All of this must be embedded in a comprehensive system of evaluation. This is more than changing the way that teachers are compensated; this is system change. The NDEA, in partnership with the NDSBA and NDCEL, will be providing training and guidance to

local associations and districts who wish to negotiate these plans.

It is important to note that these plans must be mutually agreed to and that they are exempt from impasse, or fact finding. Plans that do not have the written authorization of the district and the exclusive representative for teachers will not be considered for funding. The plans will be approved or not approved by a panel composed of two representatives each from DPI, NDEA, NDSBA and NDCEL. There is an appropriation recommended so the panel can employ staff to assist in creating rubrics for the application process, as well as to assist districts and associations who attempt to create new systems of compensation. No teacher can suffer a loss of compensation in a plan that is approved.

The bill calls for an appropriation of \$7.5 million for school districts and local associations who successfully negotiate a new system of compensation for teachers. The amount will vary by school district between \$150.00 and \$250.00 per weighted student unit, depending upon how many successful applicants there are. The funding is meant to cover between 30,000 and 50,000 weighted student units or roughly thirty to fifty percent of the students in the state. Successful applicants will have this additional funding applied directly to the district's funding formula and will continue as long as the district and the exclusive representative agree to participate in the plan. Successful plans must also be evaluated by the parties on an annual basis, submit those evaluations to the panel and jointly agree to continue in the program. STEC-P becomes available in the second year of the biennium.

The NDEA is strongly supportive of all aspects of the Commission bill, which will be introduced in the Senate this session. As soon as a bill draft is available the NDEA will let you know and it will be posted on our award-winning website at www.ndea.org.

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NDEA Sets Up PACE Protects Pensions Website

www.ndea.org/ppp

This website will provide you with updated information about the ongoing pension discussions and encourage you to get involved to protect your pension. The easiest and quickest way to do this is to donate to the NDEA PACE Fund today at www.ndea.org/ppp.

Your PACE fund Protects your Pension. As you may know, or will soon learn, educators' pensions in North Dakota are experiencing some hard times. The economic downturn of the last couple of years has severely damaged the funding of our defined benefit pension plans that we will rely on when we retire.

CONTACT YOUR NDEA LOBBYISTS AND YOUR ASSOCIATION!

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2011 LEGISLATIVE SESSION UNDERWAY

The 2011 Legislative Assembly began meeting Jan. 5, 2011, and public education issues are once again at the top of the agenda. Finding ways to ensure that ALL public educators have a safe and secure retirement and discussions about how we as public educators can lead discussion on how to best pay teachers will be debated throughout this session.

As the voice of public educators, the NDEA is looking forward to being an active participant in these discussions at the Capitol and back home. You can even participate from the comfort of your home!

We will be posting weekly web videos on the NDEA homepage and you can find more, specific information on the Legislative Action center of the www.ndea.org website. Don't know who your legislators are or how to contact them? Don't worry, just visit www.ndea.org/legislative/ and click on contact your legislator today! And this year we kicked off our efforts on Facebook and Twitter. Visit the NDEA homepage and click on the Facebook and Twitter links.



▲ Governor Dalrymple and wife, Betsy, are escorted into the North Dakota House Chamber.

Dalrymple Delivers Executive Budget

North Dakota Governor Jack Dalrymple gave his first Executive Budget Address Dec. 8, 2010 at the State Capitol in Bismarck.

"Much of the work of preparing our youth for tomorrow was begun by the Governor's Commission on Education Improvement, which I had the honor of chairing and this budget continues to make these kinds of investments," Dalrymple said. (NDEA's Executive Director Greg Burns and President Dakota Draper served on the Commission.) "Our work brought about the greatest reform of K-12 funding in our history, and now we must finish the task."

Dalrymple explained that after completing work on equity in 2007, the commission continues to work on education adequacy, and will now propose significant improvement in the

quality of instruction in our schools. To achieve this, the Executive Budget proposes an increase of \$102 million.

The figure includes \$54 million to finish the work on adequacy which began in the current biennium, as well as \$32 million to fund an increase in the per student payment of \$100 for each year of the biennium.

"Now that we have strengthened core curriculum and established scholarships for student performance," said Dalrymple, "the Commission is bringing forward a voluntary system of alternative Teacher compensation designed to reward teachers for achieving improved student success by improving teacher proficiency."

According to Dalrymple achieving student success means having a highly effective teacher in the classroom every day. "An Alternative Teacher

Compensation System will provide for supplemental teacher pay based upon multiple components including, for example: hard-to-staff positions; added knowledge, skills or responsibilities such as mentoring, coaching or instructional leadership."

Dalrymple went on to say that the plan will be developed locally by teachers and school boards. No teacher will suffer a reduction in pay as a result of these voluntary plans for supplemental performance pay. "We Commission Members believe that we can no longer compensate teachers solely on the basis of years of service," he said. "We must take a first step in beginning to reward teachers for good performance in the classroom."

For more information go to www.ndea.org/legislative.



▲ NDEA President Dakota Draper visits with Representatives Lois Delmore of Grand Forks and Kathy Hawken of Fargo.

Every Education Decision is a Political Decision... GET INVOLVED AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

As Professionals you play a vital role in shaping and influencing policies affecting your practice and expertise. Every decision made affecting classrooms and public schools is at some level a political decision.

The 2011 Legislative Assembly is now in session and we will be discussing many issues including safe

and secure pensions, alternative teacher compensation, and many other issues of importance to you as an educator. To find out whom your legislators are simply go to www.ndea.org/legislative. Or, to listen to NDEA President Dakota Draper's YouTube address each week, simply go to www.ndea.org/news.

Then, when NDEA sends out infor-

mation to you by Twitter, Facebook, Cyberline or e-mail you can take action immediately. Simply contact your legislators by going to www.ndea.org/legislative, but make sure you use your home e-mail address. Please don't contact your legislators through your Sendit account.

NDEA Testifies to Save Defined Benefit Retirements

NDEA testified on Thursday, Jan. 13, in the Senate Government and Veterans Affairs Committee to save the defined benefit plan for the Public Employee Retirement System (PERS). Then, in testimony before the House Government and Veterans Affairs Committee on Jan. 14, NDEA Lobbyist Josh Askvig lobbied for the Teachers Retirement Fund (TFFR).

He told the Committees that retirement should be a reward for a life's work. "One should not have to fret about if they will have enough to get through the remaining days of his/her life, but should enjoy retirement with family and friends," he said.

According to Askvig, the best way to provide retirement security is to ensure that ALL North Dakotans have strong defined benefit retirement plans. "Defined benefit plans are much better for employees, employers, and the state in which they reside

than defined contribution plans," he said. "Defined benefit plans provide a consistent and stable stream of retirement income until death, while defined contribution plans only provide income until the individual's funds run out."

He explained to the Committee how the NDEA Representative Assembly, the ultimate governing body of the NDEA, voted in overwhelming support of the TFFR approach to fixing the funding problem at its Representative Assembly in April 2010.

"NDEA members could have taken the easy road, he said, but they realize that in spite of significant efforts in recent years by the Legislative Assembly, North Dakota teacher salaries are likely to remain in the bottom 10 percent of the nation for years to come. They believe that one of the ways to compensate for those low salaries is to have a viable, sustainable defined

benefit retirement plan. HB1134 helps to assure that benefit will be there for current and future generations of North Dakota teachers."

Askvig added that this defined benefit plan is good not only for teachers, but it is good for local North Dakota economies as well. "That's because our retirees tend to stay in this state when they retire. Having a safe and secure retirement when they stay here, they continue to own houses, purchase automobiles, refrigerators and other consumer goods that stimulate business growth, especially in our smaller communities."

The NDEA Lobby Team will continue to support efforts to shore-up retirement plans and beat-back efforts to undermine safe and secure retirements. You can help today by visiting www.ndea.org/ppp and tell your legislators to support safe and secure retirement.

Alternative Compensation Proposal

PROPOSED LEGISLATION WILL NOW BE CALLED THE SUPPLEMENTAL TEACHER EFFECTIVENESS COMPENSATION PLAN (STEC-P)

During his first budget address, Governor Jack Dalrymple outlined a proposal to implement an Alternative Compensation program for public school educators. The NDEA has been active in crafting this plan and it is structured to ensure that public school teachers will play a large role in how these alternative compensation programs are set up. One of the key components of this proposal is that in order for school districts to be successful in receiving the additional funding the plan MUST be developed collaboratively.

Facts about STEC-P

PURPOSE:

- Improve instructional practices
- Improve educational outcomes
- Attract and retain highly effective educators
- Create a compensation system that is related to what educators do
- Provide quality assurance to the public and policy makers

KEY COMPONENTS:

- Pay for Knowledge and Skills
- Pay for Added Professional Responsibilities
- Pay for Position
- Pay for Student Growth

This program was a result of the North Dakota Commission on Education and the bill Supplemental Teacher Effectiveness Compensation Plan (STEC-P) can be researched at www.ndea.org/legislative.

Association Provides PR Grants, Gives Awards

The NDEA Public Relations Program offers grants of \$100 to \$500 to local associations. Associations must apply for a specific amount, submit a proposed PR program and estimated expenditures, and agree to meet a few criteria. Each recipient is required to write an article for the Association's official publication—*North Dakota Education News*.

Any Association interested in applying for a grant can find the application form at www.ndea.org/teachers.

The NDEA also presents the following awards during its Representative Assembly in April.

Educational Leadership Award—This award recognizes a member who has demonstrated exceptional leadership ability by improving quality education either at the local or state level.

Outstanding Local Association Award—This award recognizes an outstanding local association that promotes community involvement in public education.

ESP Leadership—This award recognizes an outstanding NDEA Education Support Professional whose position betters the education profession and the lives of students.

Media Award—This award recognizes outstanding coverage of public education by a radio station, television station, daily or weekly newspaper or a media individual. (This award does not have to be given each year.)

Professional Courage Award—An award in this category recognizes a member or a local association for assuming a risk to further the right, dignity or academic freedom of teachers. (This award does not have to be given each year.)

Any member or local association can make nominations for each of these awards. The person or persons making the nominations should provide reasons for the nomination and the qualifications of the nominee or any other documentation pertinent to the Awards Committee. The nominations can be sent by e-mail to: ellie.sharbono@ndea.org or mailed to Dakota Draper, NDEA, 410 E Thayer Ave, Bismarck ND, 58501-4049.

The deadline for submission of possible awardees is March 1.

For a local association public relations handbook, visit the NDEA website at <http://www.ndea.org/>.

NDEA Offers Grants and Scholarships

Bill Oban Special Education Scholarship

Established in memory of long-time special educator, NDEA member, and state legislator Bill Oban, this scholarship is available to undergraduate students pursuing a teaching career in special education. Awarded by the NDEA Foundation ~ Deadline – March 1.

Ron and Ann Anstrom Scholarship Fund

A program to assist current English, math or science instructors to improve their qualifications by attending summer school. Awarded by the NDEA Foundation ~ Deadline – March 1.

Joseph A. Westby Leadership Award

A \$500 stipend for an Association member or staff member to enhance their leadership skills. Awarded by the NDEA Foundation ~ Deadline – March 1.

Excellence in Education

Funded with donations from mem-

bers, memorials and gifts from individuals and businesses interested in public education in North Dakota, these scholarships assist and recognize outstanding students preparing to enter the teaching profession.

Awarded by the NDEA Foundation ~ Deadline – March 1.

Education Support Professional Award

A grant to aid an individual or group of individuals who are improving their job qualifications or conducting an activity to improve education for public school students.

Awarded by the NDEA Foundation ~ Deadline – March 1.

Educational Grants

Awarded to assist individual educators, or groups of educators, to improve their skills through continued education, research, or development of instructional materials or techniques. Awarded by the NDEA Foundation ~ Deadline – March 1.

Ethnic Minority Scholarships

Given to encourage and assist minorities to enter the teaching pro-

fession.

Awarded by the NDEA Ethnic Minority Affairs Commission ~ Deadline – March 1.

Public Relations Grant

A \$500 grant for local associations to enhance public relations in their community.

Awarded by NDEA ~ Deadline – March 1.

The NDEA Foundation is a separate 501(c)(3) charitable organization and as such, contributions may be deductible for federal income tax purposes. Members are assessed \$1.00 to fund the Foundation. Additional funding has come from individuals in the form of grants and scholarships, memorials, and contributions from businesses and individuals. Local associations may establish funds to recognize individual or group projects or for scholarships to enhance public education in North Dakota. The funds will be managed by the Foundation under a contract with the local association.

For more information about the Foundation, how to make a contribution or simply apply for a grant or scholarship, visit www.ndea.org and select the Foundation tab.

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NEA Delegates Sought for 2011 Convention

The 2011 NEA Representative Assembly (RA) will be held June 29 (travel day) through July 5 (last day of RA), 2011 in Chicago, IL.

Election of North Dakota delegates to the 2011 NEA RA begins with elections for state delegates. These delegates will be elected on the same ballot as the election for state offices. Petitions for state delegates to the NEA RA must be submitted to the NDEA office by Feb. 15.

Local associations are allocated one delegate for each 150 active and educational support NEA members or major fraction thereof. Locals with fewer than 76 members may cluster to form delegate units. Delegate credentials may not be transferred from a local to a state affiliate or vice-versa.

Presidents of locals that have 76 or more members should receive, in late February, the number of delegates to be elected to the 2011 NEA Representative Assembly with an accompanying form that is due at NDEA Headquarters by April 10 and a copy of guidelines to assure proportional representation by educational position.

Marquardt Wins Southeast Director Race

The NDEA Canvassing Board met by phone of December 22, 2010. The new Southeast Director on the NDEA Board is David Marquardt of Fargo. Marquardt beat Gale Haug of West Fargo in a special runoff election.

David Marquardt, a first grade teacher in Fargo, serves as a Fargo Education Association alternate negotiator.

Marquardt earned his Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education from Minnesota State University - Moorhead and his Master's Degree from NDSU in Elementary Administration. He has been teaching in Fargo for the past 12 years and has also coached in the



▲ David Marquardt

Fargo District for that length of time.

Besides being a member and on the North Dakota Reading Association Valley Reading Council Board for the past 10 years, Marquardt has also been a Project WET facilitator in the state since 2002. He has received several awards for his hours of promoting water education to thousands of students and educators throughout North Dakota.

Marquardt's wife, Mindy, is a social worker for Fargo Public Schools. They have three children, Leah, Lincoln and Avery. In his spare time, he coaches their summer league activities.

Petitions for NDEA Office are Due Feb. 15

Several positions on the NDEA Board of Directors are up for election next spring. They are:

NDEA President Dakota Draper of Fargo has submitted his petition for another term of office; Vice President Mark Berntson of West Fargo is eligible for reelection; Northeast Region Director Christian Skogen of Lakota is also eligible for another term; and Southeast Director Karen Christensen's term of office will expire.

Christensen is from Wishek.

Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly will also be elected to attend the NEA Representative Assembly in Chicago, IL next summer.

Petitions for open positions and for the NEA delegate slots must be in the NDEA office no later than Feb. 15, 2011. To receive a petition, contact barb.roberts@ndea.org or call 1-800-369-6332.

NDEA Bylaws Require 2 Minority Delegates

NDEA's affirmative action plan commits the Association to elect two minority delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly each year.

Two delegates are necessary to comply with the bylaws of the NEA which require delegate representation at least equal to the proportion of identified ethnic-minority population within the state.

North Dakota's ethnic minority population of the state is determined according to a census record developed by the NEA Research Division.

American Indians make up the largest ethnic minority in North Dakota.

The plan allows a candidate filing for NEA delegate positions the opportunity, if they choose, to inform members of their ethnic background in NDEA publications.

Ethnic minorities may be nominated for state delegate positions in the same manner as others, by submitting a petition signed by 50 members to NDEA Headquarters by the Feb. 15 deadline.

NDEA RA Scheduled April 9 in Bismarck

The 2011 NDEA Representative Assembly will be held at Bismarck's Doublewood Inn on Saturday, April 9.

If you are a local association with membership of 21 or less, the NDEA will help with your expenses. If needed, local associations with membership of 21 or less may voucher ½

the double occupancy room rate per delegate. Mileage for one vehicle per local will be reimbursed at 15 cents per mile. (Vouchers will be available at registration.)

Please make every effort to have your local fully represented at this very important meeting.

Constitutional Amendment Being Submitted to RA

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT Article VIII, Section 5

The majority of votes cast shall be required for election. In the event no candidate receives a majority of votes cast, a runoff election shall be conducted by secret ballot, which ballot shall include the names of the two (2) candidates polling the highest number of votes. If a special election called by the Board of Directors is conducted to fill a vacancy in an Association office, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes will be elected.

Celebrate NEA's READ ACROSS AMERICA on March 2

On March 2, the National Education Association calls for every child to be reading in the company of a caring adult. Below are some of the other things NEA provides for Read Across America.

The National Education Association is building a nation of readers through its signature program, NEA's Read Across America. Now in its thirteenth year, this year-round program focuses on motivating children and teens to read through events, partnerships, and reading resources. In North Dakota, we'll once again be giving hats to a classroom entering our contest and talking Read Across America to the North Dakota Legislature.

NEA's Read Across America Day, NEA's national reading celebration takes place each year on or near March 2, the birthday of Dr. Seuss. Across the country, thousands of schools, libraries, and community centers participate by bringing together kids, teens and books, and you can too!

Get Free RAA Books Until Feb. 19

The deadline for Free Books for Read Across America Day is Feb. 19th, 2011.

The Literacy Empowerment Foundation, a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, invites your school or other literacy project to apply for FREE books for Read Across America Day. During the past year, LEF has distributed over 3,000,000 books to schools all across the country for Read Across America Day and other literacy projects.

Resources are allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Orders must be received by Feb. 19th, 2011.

Free Books for Read Across America Day: Order Form at <http://www.lefbooks.org>

2011 Read Across America Calendars Available

The 2011 Read Across America Calendars, featuring award-winning books and links to keep you reading all year long, is now available from NEA's Read Across America while supplies last. E-mail readacross@nea.org for more information.

JOIN OUR CAUSE ON

facebook

You'll be able to share photos, videos, and ideas, plus hear the latest news from NEA's Read Across America and its partners.

SEND YOUR VIDEO TO



Looking for your 15 minutes of fame? SchoolTube has created a Read Across America channel designed to showcase student and educator videos from around the country. To sign up and share your videos, go to SchoolTube at <http://www.schooltube.com/user/NEAreadacrossamerica>.



Win hats for your class!

Share with us how you plan to celebrate NEA's Read Across America Day on March 2 to be eligible to win 'Cat in the Hat' hats for your whole class. The most creative idea will win!

Email your idea to
linda.harsche@ndea.org.
Entries must be received by
Noon on Friday, February 19.

13

SEUSS-GESTIONS

- 1 Involve all NEA members.** For example, bus drivers can set up a reading challenge; cafeteria workers can prepare recipes from your favorite books; and students and higher education members can get their campus involved in your community. All of them can be guest readers.
- 2 Look for partners to include in your event.** NEA's Read Across America has more than 50 national organization partners from the American Library Association to Youth Service America. Check out our partners list at <http://www.nea.org/grants/30483.htm> and find out if there's a local link for you. Don't forget to contact local businesses and organizations. They're great sources of book donations and volunteer readers.
- 3 Arrange for a proclamation.** Have your mayor, school board, or legislators issue a proclamation. See a sample proclamation at <http://www.nea.org/grants/30483.htm>.
- 4 Read on the radio.** Ask your local radio disc jockey to read or even broadcast from your school.
- 5 Aim high.** Who says high school students won't get involved? High School students love reader's theater and poetry slams, and middle school students can organize book fairs and read to elementary students.
- 6 Invite parents and students to don their pajamas and snuggle up and read.**
- 7 Hats off to hometown heroes.** Have students write to local heroes and ask them about their favorite books. Showcase these hometown heroes and their choices in your reading celebration.
- 8 Put reading on parade or hold a book lovers' ball.** Celebrate your favorite authors, books and characters in style.
- 9 Put on your culture cap.** Create a culture cafe and put books on the menu. Your reading recipes can combine food and fiction or nonfiction.
- 10 Break a record!** Guinness records were made to be broken, give one a try.
- 11 Make your reading event a multilingual, multicultural affair.**
- 12 Team up for reading.** Contact your local sports team for reading challenges and guest readers.
- 13 Don't forget to pledge your own event on NEA's Read Across America web site.** You'll also be able to sign up for the Read Across America e-newsletter; find out what's already being planned around the country; request a Read Across America resource kit; and order T-shirts, Cat in the Hat stovepipe hats, and more from the Read Across Catalog.

Reader's Oath

Let this oath inspire your students to become lifelong readers!

– Debra Angstead, Missouri-NEA

*I promise to read
Each day and each night.
I know it's the key
To growing up right.
I'll read to myself,
I'll read to a crowd.
It makes no difference
If silent or loud.
I'll read at my desk,
At home and at school,
On my bean bag or bed,
By the fire or pool.
Each book that I read
Puts smarts in my head,
'Cause brains grow more thoughts
The more they are fed.
So I take this oath
To make reading my way
Of feeding my brain
What it needs every day.*



NEA Academy Introduces Online Master's Degree Programs!

The NEA Academy excels in providing professional development opportunity, affordability, and convenience. That's why we're so excited to offer a new program of online Master's Degrees exclusively for NEA members!

The Academy has partnered with three leading universities - Walden, Western Governors, and UMass Online (University of Massachusetts) - all of which specialize in preparing busy educators for increased competencies and responsibilities in a wide array of education disciplines.

Why should you consider an online Master's Program through the NEA Academy?

- Learn at your own pace in the comfort of your own home
- Choose from 50 different online Master's Degree options in four main categories: General, Administration, Curriculum and Instruction, and Counseling
- Take advantage of 5%-20% discounts on course tuition plus waivers of some fees
- Compete for \$136,000 annually in NEA member-only scholarships

If you're contemplating how to move your professional education career to the next level, then an online Master's Degree through the NEA Academy could be the perfect avenue for achieving your goals. Get the details at neaacademy.org (click on the Master's Degrees tab at the top of the page). While you're there, enjoy the newly redesigned Academy website and view the complete catalog of professional development courses:

Free Online Video Presentations: ondemand.neaacademy.org/
Course Catalog: neaacademy.org/course-catalog
NEA's Leader to Leader Courses: neaacademy.org/ll-splash.html



'BULLYING HURTS EVERYONE'

BY BOB SULLO

(This article is reprinted from the Virginia Education Association because of bullying events which have recently happened in North Dakota public schools. Also, the North Dakota Attorney General's office and others are promoting proposals to make bullying illegal. Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem lists bullying legislation among his priorities for the 2011 Session. North Dakota is believed to be one of only a handful of states that has yet to pass legislation on bullying.)

The following story, as heartbreaking and infuriating as it is, is true—and happened in Virginia: Last January, a young man, a 16-year-old high school freshman, moved with his family from Texas to York County. An enthusiastic skateboarder, he dressed and acted differently from many of his new peers.

As a result, he became a bullying target. His mother believes the harassment started soon after he began attending his new school. As it continued over the next few months, she reported it to both school officials and local law enforcement.

The bullying, however, didn't let up and, in the end, proved too much for the young man to handle. Last Memorial Day, he slipped into his bedroom and hung himself.

Bullying is one of the most abhorrent behaviors we deal with in school. Sadly, it is all too common, and the problem only seems to be getting worse: worse in numbers and worse in the level of harm inflicted. Once perpetrated almost exclusively by males victimizing other males and engaged in face-to-face, today bullying is practiced by both males and females. With cyber-bullying providing anonymity, today's victims sometimes never even know the identity of their tormentors. Whereas bullying was once a horrible personal attack, and still often is, now it can also be impersonal while inflicting as much pain as ever.

Advances in technology also mean that victims have more difficulty avoiding being a target. In days gone by, a potential victim could walk home a different way or take an alternative route to class. With the Internet, there's no getting away. Once students have been targeted, they can be victimized regardless of where they are.

While the York County incident and other well-publicized examples, such as the case of a 15-year old girl in Massachusetts whose bullying-related suicide has led to criminal charges against several of her classmates, are horrendous extremes of bullying, they are only the tip of the iceberg. Far less dramatic are the innumerable bullying incidents that occur in countless schools, whether they are rural, suburban or urban; whether they are large or small; and whether they are elementary, middle or high schools. Although the majority of bullying is less extreme than what's described above, peer harassment takes a tremendous toll on its victims, their families and their communities. The emotional scars of bullying often linger for years after the actual episodes have ceased.

Prevention vs. Intervention

Most discussions about bullying focus on how to effectively intervene after bullying occurs, discouraging future offenses while providing comfort and relief to victims. Because it is so

distasteful, bullying is an emotionally-charged topic. In an effort to protect victims and demonstrate that they are fully supported by the adult community, many propose severe penalties for bullies. Unfortunately, punishment typically is ineffective. It would be wonderful if wayward students were punished, learned their lesson, and became model citizens. As we all know, it doesn't usually work that way.

More often, bullies resent any punishment they incur. While they may behave appropriately for a brief period, when things normalize they tend to revert to their bullying ways. Only this time they are a little angrier, a little smarter, and a little less likely to be caught.

The most we can hope for when we focus on post-bullying punishment is to secure a measure of justice. But justice won't bring back children who have taken their own lives or undo the emotional scars that victims and their families suffer. To effectively address the bullying epidemic, we need to switch our focus from intervention to prevention. We need to stop bullying from occurring, rather than developing interventions that have no chance of providing genuine satisfaction.

What Motivates Bullying?

All behavior, even behavior as distasteful as bullying, is purposeful. We behave to satisfy the needs that drive all human beings: to connect and belong; to be powerful; to be free; to have fun; and to feel safe and secure. Let's look at how these drives manifest in bullying behavior.

Connecting/Belonging. Some bullies victimize others in an effort to connect and belong. Bullies often have a large circle of friends. We adults may suspect that many of these so-called friends simply act friendly to avoid becoming the next victim. But bullies often believe that the friendships are genuine. In a warped way, bullying helps them satisfy the need to connect and belong. Bullies motivated by the need to connect can often be identified by looking at their relationship with peers. If they dominate their friends and peers are drawn to them to avoid being targeted, they most likely bully to build a circle of friends and satisfy the need to belong.

Power. The need for power drives more bullies than any other need. The physical and/or psychological power wielded by a bully is enormous. While there are certainly bullies who are academically successful, students who do poorly academically are at increased risk of becoming bullies. Doing well in school is a way to get power responsibly. Students who don't do well in school have a need for power, and bullying offers a way to achieve it, albeit irresponsibly. That's why it is so important for us to ensure that all

students have the ability to satisfy their need for power through success in school, athletics, the arts or some other pro-social, responsible pursuit.

Freedom. Some bullies are primarily driven by the need for freedom. Because it is frowned upon, bullying is the quintessential act of defiance, a declaration of autonomy. Their behavior screams, "You can't tell me what to do. I do exactly what I want, when I want." Freedom-driven bullies often engage in less extreme acts of bullying. Because all forms of bullying are frowned upon by the adult society, these bullies are typically satisfied by less violent acts. What matters most to them is defying authority and assert-

With cyber-bullying providing anonymity, today's victims sometimes never even know the identity of their tormentors.

ing their autonomy. Create schools and classrooms where students have the opportunity to satisfy the need for freedom while following reasonable expectations and there will be fewer incidents of bullying driven by the need for freedom.

Fun. As perverse as it sounds, bullying is often great fun for the bully. As a school psychologist, adjustment counselor and administrator, I worked with a number of bullies over the years. It was not unusual for them to tell me that the role of bully was fun. Many of these students had little capacity for empathy. Cyber-bullying, in particular, distances the bully from the victim and is often seen as fun because the victim is never seen or heard. For the fun-driven bully, the intent is not to hurt. It's to have fun. I don't say that to excuse the bully or diminish the suffering that they cause. I say it because it helps me solve this horrendous problem. When I help the fun-driven bully develop appropriate ways to meet his or her need for fun, the bullying is likely to stop.

Safety/Security. Finally, a small percentage of bullies engage in bullying behavior to feel safe and secure. These are "reluctant bullies," children who bully to keep from being victimized themselves. While their behavior is as deplorable as any other bully, it's crucial to remember that these bullies are driven to feel safe. They have no desire to inflict pain on another. Feeling trapped, they victimize others, generally at the behest of a power-driven bully, so they won't be victimized. Once the fear is removed and they feel safe, these bullies generally refrain from aggressive behavior because it no longer need-satisfying.

To prevent a problem like bullying, we need to understand why it occurs in the first place. Rather than dismissing it as aberrant behavior that can be alleviated by the threat of severe punishment, it's essential to remember that bullying, like all behavior, is purposeful. It's time to address the root cause of bullying.

Everyone is Doing The Best They Can

I emphasize prevention because prevention is more effective than intervention. That said, even the most elegantly designed prevention model will not work all the time and there will still be occasional episodes of bullying.

When bullying occurs, our impulse is often to punish and punish severely. We do this because:

- We want to show this bully and all potential bullies that we won't tolerate such inappropriate behavior.
- We want to clearly demonstrate to victims and their families that they are fully supported.
- We are offended that such behavior continues, especially when we have implemented specific strategies to prevent bullying. As a result, we quickly resort to punishment, an unmistakable sign of our frustration.

A prevention orientation will minimize the bullying problem but it won't eliminate it completely. When bullying does occur, we need to intervene effectively. It's crucial to remember that we are asking adults to act under stressful conditions. Faced with an emotionally-charged, abhorrent act of violence requiring intervention, we need to be mindful of our own behavior.

To be effective, I need to be calm, balanced and centered. If I allow myself to focus on the inexcusable behavior of bullying, I automatically perceive the bully in the most negative light and my urge to punish and punish severely dominates my thinking. My anger, frustration and desire to punish are understandable, but they are not especially helpful. But here's the crucial point. I don't have to perceive things that way. I don't have to become a victim, too. Bullying doesn't make me behave a certain way.

Everyone has choice, including me. I don't need to focus on the bullying. Even though it may go against the grain, I can remain calm and access the skills needed to intervene effectively. It's not easy. It may not come

naturally. But I have a choice. In these moments it's wise to keep in mind a central tenet of internal control psychology: everyone is doing the best they can to meet their needs. Yes, even bullies. When I am consumed by anger – even justifiable anger – I sentence myself to failure. But when I choose to remember that bullies are doing the best they can, I am able to remain calm and intervene effectively. No longer fueled by anger, I see the bully as unskilled, as someone who needs my help.

Keeping this in mind has served me well over the years. More than anything else, it allows me to remain in a role that I treasure: educator. Rather than settling for the role of enforcer and punisher, I remember that I am first and foremost an educator. When I approach a bully with anger, I am likely to be punitive and I compromise my ability to teach a better, more appropriate way to act. When I remember that everybody is doing the best they can – yes, even this bully – I continue to do what I want to do: teach under-equipped children more socially acceptable, responsible behaviors to satisfy the needs that will drive them for the rest of their lives. My unspoken message to bullies is this: "You may choose to bully others, but you can't make me do anything. I am an educator and I will do everything in my power to teach you how to act appropriately and develop the skills you need to be a productive citizen. Regardless of what you choose to do, I will remain an educator. I choose to see you as a student with behavioral, social and emotional deficiencies and I will do what I can to help you learn a better way. While I cannot 'make' you behave better, it is my choice to remain a teacher even in the most difficult circumstances."

It's hard to accept the notion that bullies are doing the best they can, especially when they inflict such pain and we see these same students behave responsibly at other times. But remembering this core principle has been invaluable for me. It has kept me from resorting to fruitless punishment and allowed me to focus on ensuring that we create schools and classrooms where students can connect, be powerful, have freedom, and enjoy themselves in a safe, secure environment. Fostering such an environment is one of my central roles as an educator and parent. And when intervention is necessary, I choose to remain calm, balanced and resourceful so I can help bullies learn a more responsible way to behave.

*Sullo (bob@internalmotivation.net) is an educational consultant with more than 30 years of experience as a classroom teacher, school psychologist and administrator. He's the author of several books, including *Activating the Desire to Learn* and *The Motivated Student: Unlocking Enthusiasm for Learning*. For information about staff development workshops, visit www.internalmotivation.net.*

Library of Congress Announces Teacher Institutes

The Library of Congress has announced its 2011 Summer Teacher Institutes. The five-day institutes are designed to introduce educators to the millions of digitized primary sources available on the Library's Web site. The session will give teachers the tools to use these resources in their classrooms and provide teachers with the opportunity to work with other teachers from across the country and share strategies for effective classroom activities.

There will be seven individual five-day sessions held at the Library of Congress in 2011. Sessions are free and fill up fast. Interested teachers are encouraged to apply as soon as possible, but not later than the February 4 application deadline. The 2011 sessions will be held on the following dates:

Session 1: May 23-27

Session 2: June 6-10

Session 3: June 13-17

Session 4: July 11-15

Session 5: July 18-22

Session 6: August 1-5

Session 7: August 8-12

For additional information and to apply for the Summer Teacher Institute, go to:

<http://www.loc.gov/teachers/professionaldevelopment/teacherinstitute/apply>

Growing Aviation within North Dakota

Kim Kenville Consulting, operating with a grant from The North Dakota Aeronautics Commission (NDAC), is managing a program to attract enthusiastic high school teachers and their students to the aviation industry. This program's goal is to spark interest in general aviation (GA) with the state's youth, leading to future careers in GA flying, corporate aviation, aerial application, airport and fixed-based operation management.

This program is designed to choose four high school teachers from across the state each year to gain an in depth understanding of aviation, and pass that knowledge on to their students. Benefits would include:

- The recipient would be enrolled in the University of North Dakota's Aerospace K-12 Professional Development for Educators (PDE) and receive two UND graded credits for 30 hours of classroom instruction for continuing education credits (CEUs).
- Credit hours, housing and per diem (under North Dakota state guidelines) would be included in the award.
- Upon completion of the Professional Development program, the teacher would be teamed with their local airport/FBO or UND instructor for follow-on support in

the development of course materials for their own curriculum.

- Funding for support, texts, and other teaching aids would be included in the award.
- Upon completion of their first full academic year, the teacher would be awarded 10 flight hours at their local airport/Fixed base operator.
- Students from approved programs would be eligible to receive a 30 minute intro flight at their local Fixed Base Operator (FBO).
- Any North Dakota high school teacher who is interested in the program is eligible. The completed application would include a 1-2 page essay, describing the person's interest in the program and their vision for implementation in their local district/school. The applicant must also have their supervisor/principal acknowledge their application for this program via signature on the initial application.

For more information, please contact Kim Kenville at 218.779.9335 or kimkenville@gmail.com or Kelby Hovey, Education Director for the North Dakota Aeronautics Commission 701.328.9650 or khovey@nd.gov

Members Can Deduct 88% of Dues

Based on Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations, NDEA has determined members who itemize deductions on their federal income tax return for the 2010 tax year may, depending on their individual tax circumstances, deduct 88 percent of their state Association dues.

Considering the 2010-11 dues amount of \$300, those who itemize deductions on their tax return may deduct \$264.00. The NEA dues of \$166 and any local dues may be deducted in their entirety. For ESP members, the amount of deduction for NDEA Dues is \$132.88 and for NEA dues it is \$96.50. The dues amount includes the special assessment for public relations, the crisis fund and the NDEA disaster relief fund. Both of these were established by the NDEA Representative Assembly.

This provision exists because NDEA is classified as a 501(c)(6) organization and that designation does not allow deduction of that portion of the dues spent on lobbying activities. NEA and local associations are organized under a different section of the tax code and are not governed by the lobby tax rule.

NDEA will compute the deductible amount for the tax year 2011 and will provide notice of that amount with the 2011-2012 membership material. It is estimated that the deductible amount will be about 87 percent. The change in deductible percentage is the result of the amount of Association resources expended for lobbying. The 2011 tax year is a legislative year.

Members who are paying dues based on part-time employment or who became members after the start of the school year should contact the NDEA office for the appropriate amounts.

Members may also deduct the \$1.00 special assessment for the NDEA Foundation. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization.



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Check out the NEA's Teacher Toolkit

NEA's Teacher Tool Kit offers online tools for teachers. Take advantage of these easy to use classroom tools, including curriculum and assessment tools, and more. Visit www.neateachertoolkit.com.

Horace Mann Offers Fellowships

For the fifth consecutive year, Horace Mann Educators Corporation (NYSE: HMN) and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library (ALPL) have partnered to form the Horace Mann-Abraham Lincoln Fellowship, a program designed to help educators teach children our rich historical heritage.

"Horace Mann believes that this partnership is an extension of our strong commitments to the education community and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library," said Lou Lower, Horace Mann President and Chief Executive Officer.

The Fellowship program offers 50 teachers the chance to study the life and legacy of Abraham Lincoln. The program includes round-trip transportation to Springfield, Ill., lodging and most meals. While educators from K to 12 are eligible to apply, the curriculum is targeted to teachers of grades 4-12.

Interested teachers should contact their local Horace Mann agent and visit the Horace Mann home page at www.horacemann.com or the ALPL home page at www.alplm.org. The application deadline is February 12, 2011, and the 50 winning Fellows will be announced in April.

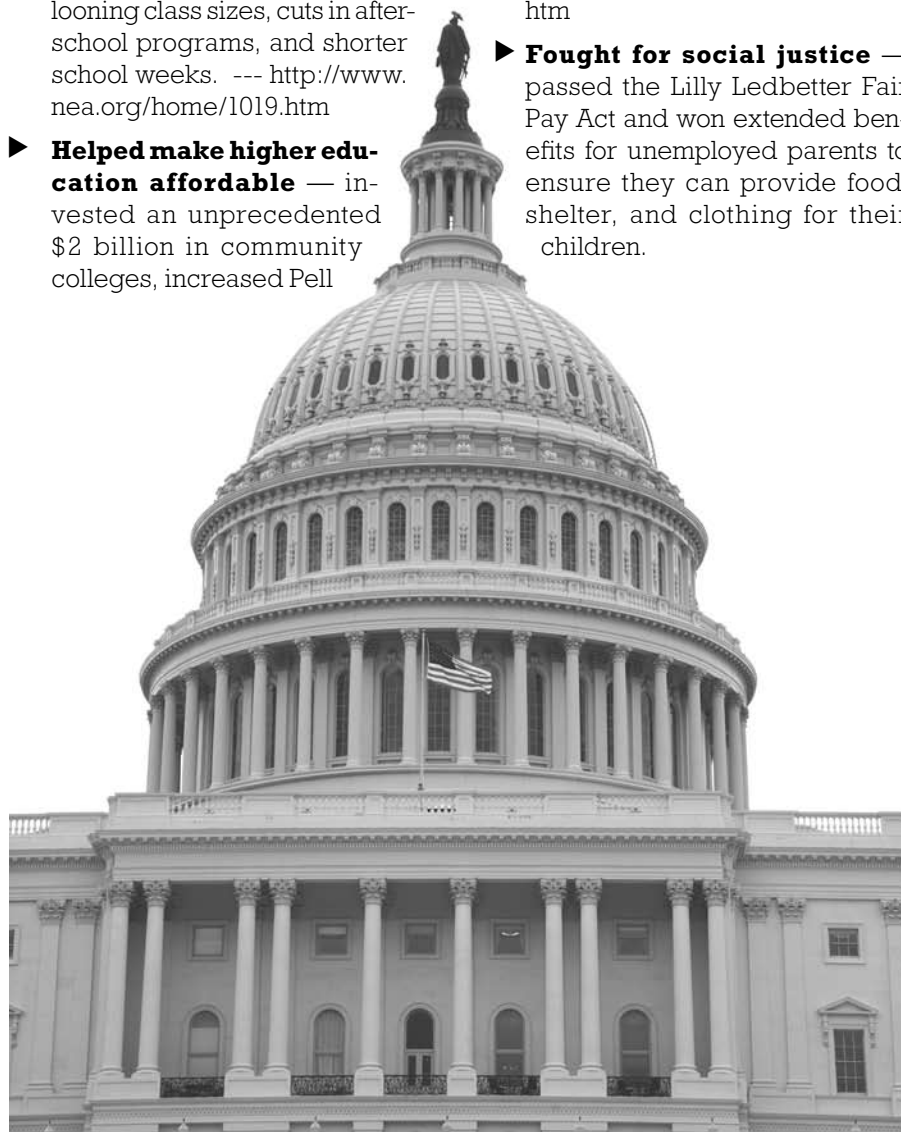
NEA advocacy: Your Values and Activism in Action!

From Capitol Hill to the classroom, your voice AND your membership matter! Thanks to you and your support, the entire NEA family and public education made historic gains in 2009 and 2010. You sent over 910,000 emails, made over 110,000 phone calls, sent over 50,000 postcards, and made thousands of visits to Members of Congress. During the 111th Congress of the United States, the NEA's advocacy:

- ▶ **Dramatically increased education funding** — the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act doubled pre-K to 12 spending, provided a \$250 tax credit in GPO/WEP states, preserved jobs, and more. --- <http://www.nea.org/home/1019.htm>
- ▶ **Improved learning conditions** — secured \$4 billion to modernize public schools.
- ▶ **Kept more than 550,000 educators working and millions of students learning** — the Recovery Act saved 400,000 jobs and the Education Jobs Fund an additional 150,000 to prevent ballooning class sizes, cuts in after-school programs, and shorter school weeks. --- <http://www.nea.org/home/1019.htm>
- ▶ **Helped make higher education affordable** — invested an unprecedented \$2 billion in community colleges, increased Pell

Grants, streamlined student loans, and more. --- <http://www.nea.org/home/16345.htm>

- ▶ **Addressed the needs of the whole child** — expanded the school lunch program, set new standards to improve the quality of school meals with more fruits and vegetables, and provided professional development for food service workers. --- <http://www.nea.org/home/38649.htm>
- ▶ **Expanded access to health care for children and adults** — added 4 million poor children to current programs, created new programs for 32 million uninsured Americans, enabled children to stay on a parent's policy until age 26, ended abuses such as lifetime coverage limits and dropping people when they get sick, and more. --- <http://www.nea.org/home/16326.htm>
- ▶ **Stopped multiple efforts to fund voucher programs** — in the District of Columbia and in Department of Defense schools. --- <http://www.nea.org/home/16378.htm>
- ▶ **Fought for social justice** — passed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act and won extended benefits for unemployed parents to ensure they can provide food, shelter, and clothing for their children.



Reduce Worry with ID Theft Protection

The statistics on identity theft are troubling, to say the least. Consider these data from the website, spendonlife.com:

- There were 10 million victims of identity theft in 2008 in the United States (Javelin Strategy and Research, 2009).
- 1 in every 10 U.S. consumers has already been victimized by identity theft (Javelin Strategy and Research, 2009).
- In 2008, existing account fraud in the U.S. totaled \$31 billion (Javelin Strategy and Research, 2009).

The unfortunate truth is that identity theft is continuing to escalate in the U.S., and victims may spend thousands of hours and dollars trying to "undo the damage." That is why NEA Member Benefits and Identity Fraud, Inc. (IFI), a pioneer in providing identity fraud solutions for individuals and businesses, are offering members both resources and discounted services through the NEA ID Theft Protection Program.

NEA members can choose from three comprehensive protection plans with savings from 15 – 33 percent off the retail price. Individual plans start at only \$19.95 per year; family plans are available for as little as \$39.95 annually. Members also have access to an extensive library of helpful information and tools to educate themselves about identity theft and what steps to take if they have been victimized.

Visit www.neamb.com and look under "Member Benefits" and the "Discounts" section for the NEA ID Theft Protection Program or www.identityfraud.com/neamb to learn more about identity theft and the ID theft protection plans available to NEA members!

Grant Applications for K-12 Community Outreach Available

Grants of \$5000 will be awarded by EduTech to thirty North Dakota K-12 schools to offer technology based workshops to community members. The funding is made available through the State Broadband Data and Development Grant Program. The goal of the program is to extend professional development to adult education programs in ND communities via teacher/administrator teams who will deliver workshops and technical assistance to community members.

Applications are due at midnight on February 23, 2011. EduTech is offering two grant writing assistance sessions on January 19 and 21, 2011 to interested applicants. Complete details are available at <https://blogs.edutech.nodak.edu/grants/>

Bjorum named 2010 Central District Health Professional

Barb Bjorum has been named the 2010 Central District Health (K-12) Education Professional of the Year. Recognition Chairperson, Patricia Morrison-Hughes of Aurora, CO says, "This award signifies the recognition of the high quality of teaching Bjorum demonstrates each day. She has enriched the depth and scope of health-related activities through development and implementation of an appropriate and effective health education program. We salute Bjorum's meritorious advocacy for quality health education and praise her successful teaching strategies as she guides those students under her care."

Last year Bjorum was named 2009 North Dakota Health Teacher of the Year. She received the annual recognition from the North Dakota Association of Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance. As a result of that award, she moved on to the regional competition. The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance consists of a nine state area. Bjorum



▲ Barb Bjorum

will be honored as an award winner at the Central District Conference in February. She is now a candidate for the national award, which will be awarded in March.

Bjorum has taught health and skills to the Valley City students in grades 7, 8, 9, and 10 since 1981. During her

tenure, she has also taught Physical Education and Adaptive Physical Education. Her coaching/advising experiences include: tennis, choreographer, track, gymnastics, drama, and Girls Athletic Association. She is presently advisor of the VCHS Peer Facilitating Program, which was originally created by Rich Winning. She is also Open Gym Advisor and National Honor Society Advisor.

Bjorum is a volunteer for Faith in Action, a board member for the local Abused Person's Outreach Center and a certified HIV Trainer for the Department of Public Instruction. Bjorum has also written two curriculums for the State Health Department. Bjorum teaches an aerobics class twice a week. She is also a NDEA member and served as VCEA President for two years.

Bjorum says, "It is nice to be rewarded for something you love to do. I am truly blessed to be able to get up in the morning and go to a job I have a passion for, with colleagues I admire and kids I love."

NEA Complimentary Life is the no-cost insurance benefit every member enjoys.

NEA Complimentary Life Insurance®

- Up to \$1,000 life insurance and \$5,000 accidental death and dismemberment coverage
- \$50,000 AD&D insurance for any covered accident that occurs while on the job or serving as an Association Leader
- \$150,000 life insurance for unlawful homicide while on the job

We're devoted to helping every member get adequate coverage affordably. Because it's so important that your family is financially secure, we provide this additional insurance benefit at no cost to all eligible members.

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NDEA Student Chapters Receive CLASS Grants

Both Mayville State University and the University of Mary NDEA Student Chapters received CLASS Grants from the NEA recently. Mayville received \$350 to promote a community book drive and University of Mary received \$800 for resources for retention.

At Mayville State University Library, remodeling has resulted in numerous books being pulled from the shelves of the library due to lack of space. An active SNDEA member brought up the idea of donating these books to area shelters so that they are put to good use rather than simply being recycled.

To take the project a step further, Mayville students ran a book drive in the community. All books were donated to shelters. The money was used for mileage, advertisements, food for the committee while packing books and also purchasing new books to donate.

The University of Mary Student Chapter realized that over the summer months, students slowly lose the comprehension of concepts that they learn during the school year.

So, the University of Mary students chose to work with the Bismarck Public School System to identify students who could benefit from receiving basic school supplies, books, and other educational materials.

University of Mary students asked for donations on items they purchased such as basic school supplies, reading activity guides, book bags, and reading materials. What they were not able to raise from donations, they pur-

chased with the \$800 they received from the NEA CLASS Grant.

CLASS Grant

Your chapter can apply for up to \$1,000 to fund your local community outreach efforts. Application deadlines: First semester, August 31; Second semester, November 30.

Who's involved in a CLASS project?

Each CLASS project involves an NEA Student Program local chapter and a pre-K-12 teacher, education support, higher education, or retired NEA local affiliate.

Why are they taking on this responsibility?

CLASS projects can make a positive difference for children. Today's students are faced with tremendous obstacles to learning and survival. Violence, drug abuse, homelessness, and child abuse, for example, are overtaking communities. There is a direct correlation between what happens in communities and what happens in schools. NEA Student Program members who volunteer in CLASS projects are able to help children overcome many of the challenges they face and provide them an opportunity to lead productive lives.

How widespread is CLASS?

The project is catching on all over the nation. Since 1989, college students volunteering in CLASS projects

have given thousands of children hope and a promise of a better tomorrow.

So what qualifies for a CLASS grant?

Any type of project can qualify as long as it addresses a local need and benefits the community. A CLASS project might be a homework hotline, for example.

Another might be a mentoring program for pregnant teens. Still another might provide services for the homeless.

NEA members gain a number of benefits from volunteering in CLASS projects. Student Program members become better prepared for their education careers. Practitioners and future educators have an opportunity to work side by side. And the project can enhance the Association's credibility in the community and on campus.

NEA's more than 2.7 million members know that winning community support for schools and universities is an effort that must begin with the Association. Community support is an essential ingredient in any program to achieve excellence.

Look upon CLASS as an opportunity to make a difference in children's lives, provide a needed community service, and strengthen the Association.

CLASS really is a class act!

For more information on Class Grants, go to www.nea.org.

Hase Receives Excellence Award

NDEA member Bruce Hase has been nominated and selected for the Teacher Excellence Award for North Dakota.

Hase, has been a Tech Education teacher at Linton for nine years.

Nominations are made by colleagues and a panel of past award winners. Hase now has the opportunity to represent North Dakota at the National Conference in Minneapolis in March.

Sunrise Get Awards

Sunrise Elementary School in Bismarck applied for and was awarded a \$900 Teacher Incentive Grant by the North Dakota Council on the Arts.

Sunrise was among 70 recipients of Teacher Incentive Grant funding. The grant will provide funds for Dream Catchers as part of the school's social studies curriculum learning about cultures. Also, the new medium of silk painting will connect to the fifth-grade reading curriculum.

NDEA members at Sunrise benefiting from the grant are Jen Erp and Deb Steffeck.

The state-funded Teacher Incentive Grant program is designed to provide financial assistance to teachers who wish to explore new and creative ways of incorporating the arts into the non-arts curriculum of a classroom.



Murphy Appointed to ND Senate



▲ NDEA President Draper chats with Representative Phil Murphy.

NDEA member Philip Murphy, a high school social studies and economics teacher, was appointed to the North Dakota Senate in December.

Murphy teaches at the Mayville-Portland-Clifford-Galesburg high school and middle school in Mayville. He lives in neighboring Portland.

He will represent District 20, which includes Traill county and parts of Steele, Barnes and Cass counties in east-central North Dakota.

Murphy will serve the two years left on Sen. Elroy Lindaas term. Lindaas resigned Dec. 1, 2010 to spend more time caring for his ill wife.

North Dakota law allows people to be appointed to legislative vacancies if there isn't time to hold an election before the legislative session.



▲ Clockwise from top: Linda Lukaski and NDEA Board Member Brad Srur in Lukaski's art class at Valley Middle School. Srur visits with recipient Susan Fire. Laurie Ball and Diane Stoley proudly display their checks.

GFEA Holds Rally for Valley

For the Grand Forks Education Association (GFEA) members who survived the flood of 1997 and the Belmont Elementary fire of 1998, it does not take much for a person to remember back to those feelings and even those smells when one sees others caught in similar circumstances. Such were the responses of teachers on the second day of school this year when the news hit that the city's water main break had flooded Valley's lower level classrooms.

The cleanup process involved a lot of effort by district teachers helping

each other to make things work. All too well GFEA members remembered about the energy needed to clean up the damage in a flooded or fire damaged classroom. They understood and applauded the efforts of Valley teachers, who came to the aid of their stricken colleagues to help with the initial cleanup and the request of Superintendent Dr. Larry Nybladh to get classes ready for Valley students as soon as possible.

Veteran GFEA members also knew that when the first wave of cleanup was done, a state of realization for

what was lost would descend. Imagine the years that teachers have spent acquiring special materials to enhance their lessons. Next, imagine them reaching for those materials in a cabinet or on a shelf only to be stopped short as they realize that those materials are now gone forever.

While the district's insurance claims had to run their course, GFEA members felt there was too much lag time and decided that it was time to rally their support for Valley members in the lower level. GFEA's Rally

for Valley fundraiser collected funds to help replace some of those teachers' lost materials.

On Friday Nov. 19, 2010, GFEA President Brad Srur was thrilled to show Valley's flood stricken GFEA members: Linda Lukaski, Diane Stoley, Laurie Ball, Laura Mason, Susan Fire, and Karina Rude their organizations support by distributing checks for \$185 each to them. Srur commented that Valley members were so surprised by the support and check amounts that it brought many close to tears.