Report of NEA-Retired Directors
NEA Board of Directors Meeting
April 29 – May 1, 2010
Washington, DC

Thursday, April 29

After attending a legislative briefing, your NEA-Retired Directors headed for Capitol Hill to lobby their Congressional Delegations for support on two major issues:

- Passage in the Senate of S.3206 (introduced by Sen. Harkin) the Keep Educators Working Bill, which would allocate $23 billion for saving and creating education jobs. States are facing a financial "cliff" because of the drying up of ARRA funds which helped to save jobs this past year. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan testified before Congress that anywhere between 150,000 to 300,000 educators could lose their jobs in the upcoming school year. Passage of this bill is vital.
- Reauthorization of ESEA - While pointing out the problems with the "Blueprint" for reauthorization authored by the current administration, and the current competitive grants, such as Race to the Top and School Improvement Grants, NEA is working to influence the writing of a bill that NEA can support. If Congress, or the Administration, produces a bill that is not consistent with NEA's vision (such as the previous No Child Left Behind), we will oppose it. Check NEA's website under ESEA to see the specifications for reauthorization that NEA will support.

Friday, April 30

President's Report
President Van Roekel began the meeting by thanking all Board members for their efforts on the Hill the previous day. He reported on attending the White House ceremony honoring the National Teacher of the Year and the finalists from all 50 states on Thursday. Prior to the beginning of the ceremony, **President Barack Obama** commented on the horrible oil spill in the Gulf, and what the administration is doing to address it. He also mentioned his support for the Education Jobs Bill. President Obama specifically recognized the NEA and President Van Roekel for their efforts to pass the Jobs Bill.

ESEA/Jobs Campaign
John Stocks, NEA Deputy Executive Director, reported on the NEA campaign for reauthorization of ESEA and the Jobs Bill. Stocks chairs a team of staff members who are focusing specifically on these issue in cooperation with the AFT, and in conjunction with all other issues on which NEA lobbies, such as the Social Security Fairness Act (repeal of GPO/WEP).
Campaign Goals:

- Secure Legislative Success (for a Jobs bill and NEA's ESEA version)
- Build Organizing Power
- Impact our Image

Kim Anderson, NEA Director of Government Relations, serves as the assistant chair of the Campaign. She detailed how NEA will involve and engage members, state governors, and members of Congress.

Edward M. Kennedy Institute
Peter Meade, President and CEO of the Kennedy Institute and recipient of the Massachussetts Teachers Association Friend of Education Award, addressed the Board. Meade pointed out that the NEA agenda and Ted Kennedy's agenda are inextricably linked. He described how the Institute can help to improve Civics education and is seeking input from practicing teachers on ways to accomplish that.

Vicky Kennedy, widow of the late Senator, thanked the Board for helping to pass healthcare reform that was so important to her husband. She described how the idea for the Kennedy Institute was born, and how it will help to teach civics and history to students throughout the country.

Report of the Secretary Treasurer

Becky Pringle, NEA Secretary Treasurer, and members of the Budget Committee presented an overview of the 2010-2012 Strategic Plan & Budget. The focus of the proposed budget is building a framework for Great Public Schools. **The budget includes increased funding for NEA Retired programs.** Goal Areas include:

- Adequate and equitable funding
- Salaries
- Priority Schools

Core Services include:

- Student Learning and Workforce Quality
- Affiliate Capacity and Membership
- Advocacy and Communications
- Partnership
- Business Operations

Overarching Strategies for Effectiveness include:

- Targeting
- Focusing
- Leveraging
- Alignment
- Economies of Scale

Women's History Observance

In observance of Women's History Month, NEA paid tribute to Dr. Dorothy Height, who recently passed away and was honored in Washington, DC. She was a confidant of Eleanor Roosevelt, Dr. Martin Luther King, and sat on the dais for the inauguration of President Barack Obama. Height challenged the status quo beginning in her teenage years. After earning Bachelors and Masters degrees from NYU, she served for 40 years as the President of the National Association for Negro Women¸ and was a leader in the Civil Rights Movement. In her own words, she chose to make her life's work "equality and justice" for women and minorities.

Black History Month Observance

Kiri Davis, twenty-one year old filmmaker and producer of "A Girl Like Me", was the keynote speaker. She created the film by interviewing Black girls and women about their perceptions of beauty as Black females living in America. The award-winning film has promoted a dialogue about self-esteem and self-image among Black females and how to counteract the negative images imposed by society.

Actions of the Board

The Board:

- Approved the proposed 2010-2012 NEA Strategic Plan and Budget for recommendation to the NEA Representative Assembly for adoption
- Approved the proposed 2011 Legislative Program for recommendation to the NEA Representative Assembly for adoption
- Approved the selection of Elections Committee members for the Representative Assembly
- Approved the selection of Diane Ravitch for the Friend of Education Award. Diane is an historian of education and currently serves as Research Professor at New York University.

- Approved the recommended UniServ Grant amount of $36,933 per UniServ unit with no rebate amount this year
- Adoped the October Super Week and Board meeting dates for 2012, 2015, and 2017 as originally proposed
- After discussing legal and financial matters of an affiliate in Executive Session, the Board affirmed the action taken by the Executive Committee to place into trusteeship the South Carolina Education Association
- Elected **Elizabeth Nahl** to represent the Board on the NEA Fund for Children and Public Education, and **Dan Quinn** as alternate
- Elected **Valerie Brown** to serve on the NEA RA Committee for New Business
- Voted to revise the current Code of Ethics to reflect the fact that the Code applies to all NEA members and not just teachers by changing the preamble to, "NEA believes that the education profession consists of one education workforce serving the needs of all students and that the term educator includes Education Support Professionals".
- Took a position to support Standing Rule Amendment 1, which requires that the text of new business items with any amendments be displayed on the video screen
- Took a position opposed to Standing Rule Amendment 2A, which would make all motions to amend subject to a motion to object to consider
- Took a position opposed to Standing Rule Amendment 2B, which would limit to 2 minutes the remarks of all delegates and eliminate the requirement that a delegate specify that he/she is speaking as an individual
- Took a position opposed to Standing Rule Amendment 2, which would make an amendment to the Legislative Program subject to a motion to object to consideration
- Took a position opposed to Standing Rule Amendment 3, which would require a majority vote of the delegates for amendments to existing resolutions submitted to the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws, and Rules by 12:00 noon on the second day of the RA to be considered, and a 2/3 vote for such amendments to pass
- Took a position to support Standing Rule Amendment 4, which would change the deadline for submitting photos and statements for candidates for executive office or membership on the Executive Committee for inclusion in an NEA publication sent to members from April 1 to March 15
- Took a position opposed to Bylaw Amendment 1, which would require NEA take a position of "no position" on the issue of abortion
- Took a position opposed to Bylaw Amendment 2, which would require that NEA take a position of "no position" on the issue of same-gender marriage
- Took a position to support Bylaw Amendment 2A, which would eliminate provisions within the Bylaws establishing an NEA Associate membership category that cannot be implemented without Constitutional authorization
- Took a position to support Bylaw Amendment 3, which would provide a procedure for the filling of vacancies in state alternate director position
- Approved a recommendation from the Executive Committee to allocate up to $5 million from the 2009-2010 Ballot Measure/Legislative Crises Fund for use by the "Behind the Wall" team for public ballot measure communications
- Approved the recommendations of the Annual Meeting Review Committee including: NEA add a strand on Men's Issues to the existing Women's and Minorities Conference, including appropriate promotion of this strand; NEA assure all delegates have access to the Annual Meeting – physically challenged delegates should be able to fully participate in all meeting activities, including access to the RA floor; and NEA disseminate information on meetings of Alcoholics Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, and Addicts Anonymous at the RA
- Approved the 2009-2010 NEA Standing and Advisory Committee recommendations as presented

Report of the Vice President
Lily Eskelsen, NEA Vice President, reported on some of her activities involving interviews on Spanish-speaking TV and radio, the Dream Act, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics) pipelines and the Jobs Bill. She emphasized that many of our supporters in the Spanish-speaking communities do not necessarily agree with us on needing to eliminate the mandates of No Child Left Behind. She also mentioned her outreach attempts and discussions with individuals in some groups who traditionally have been at odds with NEA, such as Libertarians, Free Market Advocates, and Teach for America.

She reminded the Board that the tiered dues recommendation was not approved by the February Board conference call meeting. Changing the proposal to reduce one tier's dues under the proposal, but not increase other dues to compensate, would cost NEA $10 million dollars in dues money, and so will not be considered.

Ballot Measure/Legislative Crises Fund Report
Charles Haase, NEA staff, reported on the success of the Oregon ballot measure to increase taxes to support public education. Despite dire economic circumstances and an 11% unemployment rate, OEA, with the help of NEA's Ballot Measure Fund, ran a very successful campaign and won in the January election. The proposed CA "paycheck deception" measure has been stopped and will not appear on the ballot, but unfortunately, FL has several ballot measures which are detrimental to public education. NEA is anticipating various ballot measures in several states in November that will require assistance to the states from NEA.

Report of the Executive Director
John Wilson, NEA Executive Director, reported on some additional new federal grants for which NEA will be working with affiliates to qualify. He also honored four recent NEA staff retirees: **Diane Shust**, Director of Government Relations; **Kay Brilliant**, Director of Education Policy & Practice; **Marilyn Rogers**, Western Regional Director; and **Dorothy Harrell**, Director of Constituent Relations.

Great Lakes Center for Educational Research
Terry Battaglieri, of the Great Lakes Center for Education Research & Practice, addressed the Board and presented the first copies of their newest book entitled Think Tank Research Quality, which exposes the bias and inaccuracies of much of the "think tank" education research that drives policy decisions in the United States. She thanked the NEA for the 10 years of support that it has provided to the Great Lakes Center.

Saturday, May 1

Tribute
President Van Roekel began the session by paying tribute to **J.D. Miller**, NEA Student Director, who passed away this year at the tender age of 21, after a courageous battle with cancer.

Report of the Secretary Treasurer
Becky Pringle, NEA Secretary Treasurer, reported that total full time active certified membership is down 13,533 members (mostly due to layoffs and cuts), ESP has grown 4,230 due to active recruiting in states, student membership has grown by 4,300, **retired membership has grown by 4,387**, higher education is up 2,400 members. She detailed net assets of over $71.5 million. With 41.67% of the fiscal year remaining, there is 47.69% of the budget remaining, so there are no anticipated financial problems.

Campaign & Elections Report
Sean Johnson, NEA staff, reported on upcoming races for 37 Governors and 36 Senate races. Sixty-two percent of Americans feel that the country is on the wrong track, which does not bode well for the party in power. Registration for Republicans has decreased while Independents have gone up, and Democrats have stayed constant. If Republicans can win the majority of the Independent vote, they could take back the House or Senate. Congressional approval rating is down to 16%, and historically mid-term elections have resulted in losses for the party of the President. NEA will be targeting 19 Governors races, 19 Senate races, and 46 House races in partnerships with specific state affiliates.

NEA Health Information Network
Jerry Newberry, Director of NEA/HIN, gave the Board an update on the activities of the HIN. NEA now offers an online course through the NEA Academy that deals with IEQ, Indoor Environmental Quality. This five-module course can be used for professional development credit and is free to members. NEA is encouraging members to take the course and will be offering grants to teams of members from worksites to implement activities in conjunction with the course.

Health Care Reform Update
Bill Raabe, NEA staff, detailed the progression that resulted in health care reform in which NEA played a key role. President Van Roekel led the fight for changing the original excise tax proposal and helped to modify it so that it was acceptable to union members. Implementation will be difficult, but NEA will be there every step of the way.

Report of the General Counsel
Alice O'Brien, NEA General Counsel, reported on the progress of the long-running litigation that NEA filed against the Bush Administration concerning the interpretation of the Landrum-Griffin Act which would require all state affiliates to comply with the law, even if they don't represent members in the private sector. NEA is hopeful that the matter will be resolved soon through working with the current administration to change the unfriendly interpretation of the law. She detailed potential legal protections for staff subject to "Turnarounds" in the School Improvement Grants. NEA will provide legal counsel/support to state or local affiliates who may need help with this matter.

Asian/Pacific Islander Observation
Marie Byung-OK Lee, keynote speaker, is the daughter of Korean immigrants and award-winning author of several best-selling books for children and young adults dealing with racism or feelings of being an outsider. She spoke about her childhood experiences of being bullied at school and the negative effect that had on her growing years. She also thanked the teachers who took the time to stop the bullying, recognize her as an individual, and encourage her specific skills as a writer. She encouraged all teachers to do likewise for their students.

Read Across America
Penni Cyr, NEA Director, and **Paula Monroe,** Executive Committee, reported on the overwhelming success of NEA's Read Across America day on March 2nd. NEA received priceless positive PR on TV, radio and in print news throughout the country because of this program. NEA has also established the "Lorax Green Earth Day" in conjunction with Earth Day on April 22nd, and has started a new $1000 grants program for schools to participate in "Green Across America" projects.

Discussion Groups
The Board broke into small groups of ten for the purpose of discussion of three major topics: reapportionment of the Board when it reaches 150 members; most prevalent issues at state delegate

assemblies; and anticipated "hot topics" for the RA. Following the break-out sessions and prior to adjournment, the Board provided feedback on these issues by voting on specific questions through the use of electronic clickers.

Report compiled by Linda Somo
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Important Reminders
NEA Retired Annual Meeting
Sheraton New Orleans Hotel, New Orleans, LA
Sunday, June 27 – Tuesday, June 29, 2010

See *This Active Life* for information.
Online registration only

Notification of approval of new NEA Retired Grant recipients
June 1, 2010

Deadline for submission of NEA-Retired Grant Final Report
July 1, 2010