Report of NEA-Retired Directors
NEA Board of Directors Meeting
September 30 – October 2, 2010
Washington, DC

Thursday, September 30

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

1. NEA's basic tenets for reauthorization of the Elementary & Secondary Education Act (ESEA or NCLB). These tenets include:
    - Accountability systems that recognize schools that make progress toward achieving learning goals and correctly identify struggling schools – to provide meaningful support instead of punishment; base determinations of school success on multiple measures, not just limited test scores
    - Support for school transformation models that promote innovation through collaboration among all stakeholders
    - Ensuring continued targeting of most federal education resources to schools with the greatest need through fully-funded formula-driven programs instead of competitive grants
    - Belief that effective teaching goes far beyond knowledge of subject matter and is much more than what can be measured by test scores
2. Rejection of any proposed cuts to Social Security benefits, including an increase in the retirement age; opposition to risky privatization schemes; **and repeal of the GPO/WEP.**

Friday, October 1

President's Report
President Van Roekel began the meeting by explaining his rationale for establishing agendas and Board seating, and setting his expectations for Board behavior and participation. He mentioned that the NEA has established working relationships not only with the Department of Education, but also with other national departments. He expressed the belief that NEA will have a good year working with the current administration. President Van Roekel took time to honor several NEA members who have recently passed away, and paid tribute to **Steven Knipp,** IL Vice President, who formerly served in many capacities with the Native American/Alaska Native Caucus.

Board Actions
The Board elected **Shelly Moore and Dawn Shepherd Pope** to serve on the NEA Program and Budget Committee. The **Executive Committee** recommended, and the Board approved:

- An allocation of up to $500,000 from the Contingency Fund to the Washington Education Association to support education, healthcare and tax relief
- An allocation of $571,270 from the Contingency Fund for implementation of the 2010 New Business Items adopted by the NEA Representative Assembly
- The appointment of Donna Mirabelli to serve as the At-Large interim director in the administrator category until the election can be held at the 2011 Representative Assembly.

The Board also approved the proposed NEA Committee appointments. The following **NEA Retired members will serve on an NEA Committee: Al Beamish (MI) & Barbara Clementi (CO), Sexual Orientation/Gender Identity; Linda Pondexter Chesterfield, Women's Issues; Jon-Paul Roden (CT), Committee on Employee Advocacy; Susie Jablinske (MD) & Michael Zulich (IN), Committee**

on Legislation; Fran Valenzuela (TX), Membership Services; Jim Sproul (KY), Membership Advisory, and Social Security Fairness; Barbara Cunningham (IA), Read Across America; Eloy Gonzales (NM), Credentials; Beverly Ausfahl (CO), Elections; Keith Geiger (VA), John Hieronymus (IA), Sue Hovey (ID), Gary McDowell (WV), & Judy Wray (OH), Review Board; Debbie Hogue-Downing (OK), Equity & Ethnic Harmony; Kathy Campbell (AZ) &Mary Bruce Ogles (AL) ESEA.

Campaigns & Elections
Karen White, NEA staff, urged all members to log onto NEA's Campaign 2010 website, www.EducationVotes.org. **Sean Johnson**, NEA staff, reviewed the political landscape, expectations for the upcoming elections, and NEA's activities throughout the country in helping to elect NEA recommended candidates. NEA and state affiliates are very active in over 70 Congressional Districts and 20 Senate races nationwide. Johnson urged all Board members and NEA members to be active participants in the upcoming elections. He stated that we can make a huge difference in the outcome of the elections and that it is critical to keep our "friends" in office, especially for the reauthorization of ESEA.

Membership & Organizing
Betsy Diase, NEA staff, reported on the various organizing projects throughout the state affiliates. The NMS Task Force recommendations focus on growth and building a culture of organizing; targeted, integrated campaigns; new markets, mergers and affiliations; growing constituency groups; AR infrastructure development; use of data and technology; and interim and crisis assistance for affiliates.

ESEA Reauthorization
Donna Harris-Aikens, Director of Education Policy & Practice, reported on NEA's opposition to the Administrations "Blueprint for Reform". Refer to lobbying points above for NEA's stands on the policy. **Kim Anderson, Director of Government Relations,** said that nothing will happen legislatively until the next Congress. The "Blueprint" will be the starting point, but NEA will push their changes and use the results of the NEA Priority Schools Program as the alternative to the three turn-around models in the Blueprint. NEA will also be pushing for formula-driven funding, as opposed to competitive grants. Just as with the recent passage of the Jobs Bill, NEA members nationwide will be an integral part of eventually passing acceptable legislation for the ESEA.

Vice President's Report
Lily Eskelsen, NEA Vice President, reported on her activities revolving around ESP and Higher Education organizing and exploring school reform which included attending an Education International Conference in Canada, a Higher Education Conference, and a trip to Honduras for the NEA Foundation. She emphasized the implications of the Honduras project for NEA's Priority Schools Program which strives to transform schools from poverty areas to high achieving schools. Also, she continues to meet those who would normally not be considered our "friends", such as Rick Hess, recognized advocate for charter schools and outspoken critic of public schools. Lily emphasized that we can always learn from our discussions with those who disagree with us, and can even find common ground at times.

Native American/Alaska Native Observance
Debbie Hogue Downing, Chair of the Native American/Alaska Native Caucus, (and NEA Retired member), introduced the keynote speaker, **Tim Tingle**, author of children's books of his native Choctaw stories, recognized speaker, and representative of the Native American Smithsonian Institute. He emphasized the importance of reading in raising achievement levels of all students. He recommended a website by Debbie Reese for information on materials for those who want to learn more about Native Americans, and a book by Paul Chaat Smith, Everything You Know About Indians Is Wrong, as a good

starting point. He thanked educators and the NEA for leading the way to better understanding and acceptance of all.

Strategic Discussions
Following the lunch break, the Board participated in small group discussions on three topics:

- The proposed constitutional change to the 75% requirement for classroom teachers on all NEA Committees
- Proposed Fund Council changes to Presidential recommendation guidelines
- RA Debrief

GLBT Observance
Sirdeaner L. Walker, guest speaker, has become a leading spokesperson for the Safe Schools Improvement Act, which would protect all students from bullying and harassment. Sirdeaner's eleven-year-old son, Carl, committed suicide after experiencing bullying and harassment at school. Even though she reported the problem to school officials and tried to seek help from them, nothing was done to alleviate the situation and eventually led to her son's suicide. Following the death, she began working with GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, Straight, Education Network) to seek legislation which would address the rising tide of bullying and harrassment. She stated that bullying is not a race, gender, or gay issue. It is a safety issue for all students.

Report of the Secretary Treasurer
Becky Pringle, NEA Secretary Treasurer, reported that NEA has lost 34,000 Active members, for a 1.4% decrease, and 507 ESP members for a .1% decrease. Student membership reached a new high with a 6.7% increase, and **Retired increased 5,312 to 261,770 for a 2.1% increase.** Financially, all departments are completing their 2009-2010 year end wrap up and preparing for the yearly audit which is in progress. The audit Committee will meet with PricewaterhouseCoopers and the final audit will be presented to the Board at the December meeting. All state affiliates are on time with their transmittal of dues and there are no problems to report. There is $1.9 million left in the Contingency Fund after the expenditures that the Board approved at this meeting. Pringle also reported that NEA has paid off the NEA Building. Because of economic circumstances nationwide, NEA is exercising fiduciary caution and responsibility by finding ways to reduce the budget without hurting programs. Pringle described the tasks of the new NEA Commission on Effective Teaching and the expected outcomes.

Clicker Exercise & Jobs Bill Celebration
Board members voted individually, and received immediate feedback, via the use of electronic clickers, on a variety of topics based on the strategic discussions that took place after lunch. Following that, President Van Roekel led the Board in a celebration of the passage of the Education Jobs Bill.

Saturday, October 2

Executive Director's Report
John Wilson, NEA Executive Director, reported that:

- NEA will try a pilot program at the 2011 RA which will incorporate multiple pre-conferences (on a voluntary basis) under one umbrella of 21st Century Skills, and combine them into one large conference with break-out sessions that are unique to an individual conference
- Many state affiliates are still at risk financially because of staff retirement funds and federal laws regarding those funds

- NEA will be pushing for state legislatures to meet their responsibilities for funding public education
- NEA is again a co-sponsor of the Celebration of Teaching & Learning in New York City in mid-March; there will be a pre-conference which will bring together education experts from a variety of countries around the world to discuss best practices.

General Counsel's Report

Alice O'Brien, NEA General Counsel, reported on the following cases:

- The Arizona court has stopped SB1070 (anti-immigration law) from going into effect with an injunction; the decision is now being appealed by the state at the 9th District Circuit Court
- The California court has invalidated Prop 8 (anti-Gay marriage); it will now go to the 9th District Circuit Court
- WEA (Wisconsin) won its lawsuit stating that personal emails of employees on school computers are not subject to public disclosure; district administration may be allowed to access, but the news media or the general public cannot
- In Michigan a law requiring public employees to pay an extra 3% into an escrow account for retirement (which was not guaranteed to be used for the employee) has been ruled invalid
- There are many legal issues due to RTTT and SIG transformation schools in regards to protecting teachers' privacy, evaluations and contract provisions. The Los Angeles Times published teacher evaluations based on "value added rating methodology" that resulted in the suicide of a teacher who was rated as inadequate. The Times published the report after studying 7 years of data gathered on 18,000 teachers and could only find 7,000 which they considered statistically significant enough to publish. Even though the methodology was questionable, the Times insisted on publishing.

One Nation Working Together Rally

Following adjournment, the Board participated in the "One Nation Rally" at the Lincoln Memorial. Attending were over 250,000 representatives from many different unions, faith-based groups, and progressive organizations all coming together for a common purpose and common message of "peace, justice, jobs, equality, and quality education for all". The emphasis was on Get Out The Vote in Nov.

Report compiled by Linda Somo

Respectfully submitted by your NEA Directors:

Monica Beaudoin	beaudn@verizon.net
John Campbell	jscampbell4540@gmail.com
Barbara Cunningham	misscatsms@yahoo.com
Sid Johnson	sjrazorback@gmail.com
Linda Somo	lsomo@cox.net
Jim Sproul	jgsproul@barbourville.com

Important Reminder

Register for NEA Retirement & Benefits Forum at www.regonline.com/nearbforum2010

Nov. 4-5, 2010, National Labor College, Silver Springs, MD (call 800-462-4237 Option 8)

Room rate of $175 per night includes meals; mention "NEA Forum" to get that rate