Report of NEA-Retired Directors
NEA Board of Directors Meeting
December 9 – 12, 2010
Washington, DC

Thursday, December 9

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

1. Passage of the Dream Act in the Senate. The House passed it Wednesday by a vote of 216 to 198
2. In preparation for discussion of reauthorization of ESEA (Elementary & Secondary Education Act), NEA is advocating for taking a "whole child" approach to education in order to maximize student achievement and close achievement gaps. NEA's Priority Schools Campaign is focused on helping schools address:
    - Physical, social and emotional health and well-being
    - Equity in education opportunity
    - Experiences in and out of the classroom
    - Safe and supported students
    - Modern, up-to-date school conditions and access to a broad array of resources
    - Class size
    - Parental and community involvement
3. Concerns about the Fiscal Commission Report and its recommendations to slash discretionary spending, even though the federal government consistently underfunds education programs targeting children most in need, such as IDEA and Title 1
4. **Opposition to any and all attempts to cut Social Security, and support for repealing the GPO/WEP.**

Friday, December 10

President's Report
President Van Roekel began the meeting by reviewing the agenda and detailing some of his comments made while speaking at a recent national conference. He mentioned all the changes in education policy that have taken place nationwide over the past few years and how the results of the 2010 election will negatively impact public education even more. Some things that NEA is already doing in response to what is happening around us are:

- The National Campaign Team will continue to function with an emphasis on ESEA reauthorization and countering attacks on state affiliates
- Focusing on message and communication to combat those who wish to destroy public education
- Focusing on building member participation in EducationVotes.NEA.org to keep members informed and active; all state and local affiliates are encouraged to get all members connected to this website
- Priority Schools Campaign

Special Presentation
Angelos Gavrielatos, President of Australia Education Union, and Susan Hopgood, General Secretary of the Australian Education Union and **President of Education International,** addressed the Board. Gavrielatos detailed the proposals of the current government in Australia that are damaging to public education, similar to many proposals in the US. Hopgood focused on the human rights of all students and emphasized that the EI represents 64 million teachers worldwide who fight daily for the rights of their students. There are 74 million children worldwide who have no access to an education. EI strives to provide quality public education for all children and human rights for all. The global financial crisis has caused a substantial decrease in the amount of aid from developed countries, such as the US and Australia, to developing countries. This has had a devastating

effect on education and other social services. EI will continue to advocate for investments in the future through education.

Post Election Landscape

NEA staff reported on NEA's successes and failures during the 2010 election. On the positive side, NEA was successful in three out of the five key Senatorial races in which they mobilized members, several governors' races, and a handful of critical House races. Thousands of NEA members were actively engaged in races nationwide. **Kim Anderson, Director of GR,** reported that despite the losses, there was nothing more that NEA members could have done. It was a "perfect storm" that defeated many of public education's supporters. We lost 680 pro-public education seats in state legislatures, the biggest shift since 1928. State affiliates will be facing many challenges in the next few years that will revolve around: budget deficits and consequent cuts to education funding; attacks on pension funds; repeal of previous education wins; anti-union attacks that include repeal of collective bargaining and elimination of payroll deduction of dues; and teacher reform policy proposals and attacks on public education that are being driven by those outside of the education community. Anderson emphasized that this is a "war" that must be fought by every NEA member in their own communities.

John Stocks, NEA Assistant Executive Director, reported on how NEA is planning to address all of these issues and how they can assist state affiliates to counter the attacks at the state level through the National Campaign Team. The overarching goals of this coordinated campaign are:

- to advance the NEA Mission and Vision;
- to strengthen affiliates and counter the anti-union attacks
- to achieve public policy that enhances public education and better supports teaching and learning;
- to reposition the NEA as the leader in the transformation of public schools through the reauthorization of ESEA and NEA's Priority Schools Campaign

All of this will be done in cooperation with state affiliates and extensive member input, because the fight will be at the state level. The emphasis will be on protecting membership rights. Because of limited resources, NEA will be targeting specific states as battlegrounds to set the groundwork for helping all states.

Sheila Simmons, Director of the Priority Schools Campaign, reported on the progress being made to reach NEA's goal of focusing resources on school transformation involving educators, communities and policymakers collaborating on innovative programs to measure student success and teacher quality, as well as attracting and keeping the best educators and resources for the schools of greatest need. This six-year campaign is research and evidenced based. Schools in targeted states selected by NEA represent 40% of 1037 schools nationwide that qualify for national School Improvement Grants and are predominantly secondary. Eighty-five percent of the students served by this program are receiving free or reduced lunch and are predominantly minority students located in urban schools.

Holiday Celebration

Before adjourning for lunch, the Board was treated to a medley of Christmas and holiday songs by the Watkins Mill High School Chamber Singers Choir.

Headline News

Valerie Wilk, Higher Ed Dept., reported on a new structure and greater visibility for the department, with an emphasis on Higher Education organizing, Emerging Leaders Academy training, training leaders how to do one-on-one visits, and NCHE President presentation at the White House Summit on Community Colleges.
Carrie Pugh, Strategic Federal Initiatives Dept., reported on their work with the Priority Schools Campaign and the new emphasis on "the whole child" as they work with numerous government agencies.
Roxanne Dove, ESP Quality Dept., cooperated with other national organizations to promote ESP issues and pass important legislation. They continue to advocate for the importance of ESP in educating all students.

Becky Daise, Membership & Organizing, reported on how NEA is responding pro-actively to the loss of membership and the anti-union attacks nationwide.
Kimberly Anderson & Tommie Leaders, NEA Student Program, reported how students were actively involved in important political campaigns, in enrolling new active members, and preparing to be the leaders of the future.
Todd Crenshaw, NEA Retired, reported on all of the areas in which NEA Retired members are involved, such as fighting privatization and cuts to Social Security & Medicare, repeal of the GPO/WEP, secure pension protection, mentoring student teachers, lobbying, and working in political campaigns.

NEA Teacher Quality
Segund Eubanks, NEA staff, detailed the NEA's work on developing a framework for teacher effectiveness, assessment and evaluation. The report lays out five core principles for transforming education systems to support effective teaching and improving student learning:

- Safe and open collaboration
- Measure teacher performance using multiple ratings and based on clear teaching standards
- Integrated systems must be validated and meaningful
- Teacher input in determining performance and learning outcomes
- Assessments must be negotiated in collaboration with the association

Bill Raabe, Collective Bargaining & Member Advocacy, discussed NEA's plan for a professional growth pay system. Two key questions that should be asked when building a pay system are: what is the purpose of the salary schedule, and do we expect the same strategies we've use in the past to produce different results? NEA has developed a framework that can be used by locals to build their own model.

Executive Director's Report
John Wilson, NEA Executive Director, stated that plans for the Representative Assembly will be different this year with a day of professional development being planned in which all delegates can choose to participate prior to the RA. He mentioned a new ongoing research project on teacher effectiveness from the Gates Foundation that uses a variety of ways to evaluate teacher effectiveness. In other areas, he reported that 98% of school employees believe that it is their job to intervene when they encounter bullying, and NEA has developed materials to train members in how to prevent bullying. **To end his report, Wilson announced that he is retiring effective August 31st. Following the announcement, President Van Roekel announced that John Stocks will be the next Executive Director of NEA.**

Special Guest
Hilda Solis, U.S. Secretary of Labor, addressed the Board. She praised NEA as the true champion of all of America's children. She acknowledged that NEA members were responsible for helping to pass the DREAM Act in the House. One of seven children of immigrant parents, and the first of her family to earn a college degree¸ Solis has been an outstanding advocate for the working class men and women of this country. She praised a former teacher for giving her the confidence to even think about attending college. Solis touted the necessity of extending unemployment benefits to the two million Americans who have been unemployed for extended periods. She mentioned the federal Job Corps program that has helped many students nationwide, and encouraged members to refer students who need a "second chance" to be successful. She is an advocate for worker rights and believes that workers should be able to collectively bargain. In defending the recent Obama compromise on the Bush Tax credits, she stated that Obama negotiated $238 billion in savings for working class families while the Republicans received $113 billion for the richer Americans.

Standing Rules Reorganization
Bill Bjork, Chairman of the Committee on Constitution Bylaws and Rules, presented a special report on the reorganization and restatement of the Standing Rules. No rules will be changed, simply reorganized to make them more user-friendly and easier to locate. If accepted by the Board in February, it will be presented to the RA. If adopted there, it will become effective in September, 2011
Report of Secretary Treasurer

Becky Pringle, NEA Secretary Treasurer, presented information in an Executive Session regarding the NEA budget. Although NEA has taken steps to economize, become more efficient, change the way it does business, and anticipated a membership loss, the losses have been even greater than expected this year and appear as though they will increase next year. Plus, the projected increase in average teacher salary will be less than anticipated, resulting in a proposed $2 dues increase instead of the previously proposed $4 increase for the second year of the budget. Subsequently, there is significantly less revenue than anticipated for this year and next which will require a major restructuring of the two-year budget. There has been a loss of 39,000 members for active certified, a loss of 6,900 for ESP with 41 states experiencing a decrease in membership, for a total membership loss of over 58,000. **On a positive note, NEA Retired membership has increased by 3,087,** and Student membership has increased by almost 3,000. The annual audit has been completed and NEA is in solid financial health with unrestricted net assets of over $61 million and over $1.9 million in contingency. With a ratio of $3.40 of assets for every $1 of liability, NEA far surpasses the industry standard ratio of 2:1.

In other areas, Pringle has participated in many minority community outreach meetings and discussions, and has represented NEA at a variety of venues, interviews and panels.

Saturday, December 11

Commission on Effective Teachers and Teaching

The NEA has created a national, independent commission to study the teaching profession and make recommendations on maximizing teacher and teaching effectiveness. **Joyce Powell**, **Executive Committee** member, and **Becky Pringle, Secretary Treasurer,** reported that the commission consists of 21 accomplished teachers – supported by researchers, policymakers and academicians – who will examine the policies and practices governing the teaching profession and craft a new teacher-centered vision of teaching and the teaching profession. The Commission is charged with accomplishing work in four areas:

- Analyzing existing standards, definition, policies and practices related to teacher effectiveness and effective teaching
- Crafting a new vision of a teaching profession that is led by teachers and ensures teacher and teaching effectiveness
- Developing a comprehensive set of recommendations for the NEA about the union's role in advancing and promoting teacher effectiveness and the teaching profession
- Developing a comprehensive set of recommendations for education leaders and policymakers about the future of the teaching profession and the role of teachers in governing it.

Report of the Committee on Constitution, Bylaws and Rules

Bill Bjork, Chair of the CCBR, presented the proposed changes to the NEA Campaign and Election Guidelines. Because of new rulings from the federal Department of Labor easing prior restrictions, the CCBR is recommending amendments to the guidelines that remove current restrictions that prohibit the use of subjective statements on campaign materials. Currently, campaign materials are restricted to only objective statements. The Board will vote at the February meeting on this item.

Actions of the Board

The Board:

- Elected **Sid Johnson (NEA Retired), Alicia Bata, Kathy Vetter, Maury Kaufman, Stephen Henry, Brenna Isaacs, Tim Graham and Tom Nicholas** as delegates from the Board (**George Sheridan & Laura Vernon as alternates)** to the National Congress of Education International, which will take place in Cape Town, South Africa, in July, 2011
- Approved the Executive Committee recommendation to adopt amendments to the NEA Caucus Guidelines that will require at least 25 members for a caucus to be recognized, while exempting the current caucuses from this requirement
- Approved the Executive Committee recommendation to establish a special Affiliate Defense Fund (up to $5 million) under the Ballot Measure Legislative Crisis Fund that allows for allocations based on

targeting and legislative threat levels, rather than when a state application is submitted. Since funds are limited and needs will be substantial, NEA needs to be more targeted and timely in allocation of these funds.

Strategic Discussions

The Board broke into small groups to have strategic discussions about three major issues:

1. What are the major characteristics of effective teaching and what role should the union play?
2. What are the advantages/disadvantages of lowering the minimum requirement of 75% classroom teachers on all NEA committees? If the minimum were lowered, what should it be and why?
3. Given the current economic and political environment, what is more of a priority/no longer as critical as it seemed last year?

Report of the Vice President

Lily Eskelsen, Vice President, reported on her recent activities. She represented NEA (and all public school employees) at the Connecticut Forum and the Creative Coalition of New York addressing the movie "Waiting for Superman", where she countered proponents of vouchers, charter schools, and anti-union sentiments. Eskelsen also detailed plans for the **NEA Academy** to serve as a clearinghouse of the highest quality, on-line professional development to be made available at a discount to members. NEA has a content quality review board who use objective criteria to evaluate each course. In Continuing Education areas, NEA Academy has 12 providers and over 50 courses, with graduate credit available. Berlitz foreign language classes that normally cost $990 are offered to members at a cost of $299. Master Degree programs offer NEA members 5-20% discounts on normal cost, and NEA even offers member scholarships.

Hispanic Caucus Celebration

Dr. Theresa Montano, author of "Assaults on Our Children", spoke on the topic "Educating Hispanic Students Is Everybody's Business". Montano taught in the Los Angeles public schools where she was a UTLA member, and currently teaches at the university level. The Latino/a student population has continued to grow in the US, now equaling over 15%, and projected to be more than 30% by the year 2050. Montano emphasized the diversity within the Hispanic population. Almost 50% of Latino children in schools are American born. They are more likely to not have access to preschool, be in segregated classrooms taught by inexperienced teachers, and more likely to drop out before graduation. She urged all educators to promote the idea that it is the right of every child to have access to a quality public education and to live in a multi-cultural, multi-lingual United States.

Report of the General Counsel

Alice O'Brien, General Counsel, reported that, effective January 1, 2011, the final rule will rescind the Department of Labor's 2003 reinterpretation of the LMRDA to cover intermediate labor organizations (such as pure public sector NEA state affiliates) by virtue of their affiliation with a parent union (such as NEA) that is covered by the LMRDA. The 2003 reinterpretation reversed DOL's position dating back to enactment of the LMRDA over forty years ago that pure public sector labor unions were not subject to the LMRDA. NEA filed detailed comments with the DOL last April in support of the rescission of the 2003 reinterpretation, which the DOL relied upon in deciding to issue the final rule. Significantly, the new rule brings to a successful conclusion the long running *Alabama Education Association v. Chao* litigation, which NEA filed in 2003 on behalf of 33 pure public sector NEA state affiliates to challenge DOL's position that such affiliates were subject to the LMRDA – and thus required to comply with all of its requirements regarding financial reporting, member rights and disciplinary procedures, union elections, trusteeships, and fiduciary obligations – solely by virtue of their affiliation with NEA. As a result of the litigation, the DOL agreed not to enforce the 2003 reinterpretation against NEA's pure public sector state affiliates. Now, with issuance of the final rule, NEA's pure public sector state affiliates will be freed of any obligation to comply with the LMRDA so long as they continue to represent, and seek to represent, only public sector employees.

O'Brien also reported on the ISTA Trust Litigation in which the secretary of state sued ISTA, ISTA Trust, and NEA for receivership. NEA defeated the request for receivership, and the McAllen plaintiffs' class action was dismissed.

On the issue of tenure, O'Brien reminded members that tenure is actually just due process that is awarded to most teachers after at least three years in a particular district, and that teachers can still be dismissed for just cause. Tenure is the single most effective method of protecting teachers from arbitrary, unfounded actions, and preserves the classroom as an arena for professional judgment and independence.

U.S. Labor Community

Michael Edwards, NEA staff, reported on the NEA/AFL-CIO Labor Solidarity Partnership Agreement. He stated that the labor union movement is at a crossroads. Even though traditional unions helped to build the middle class and won important safeguards for workers, membership in unions has fallen dramatically in recent years as many jobs represented by unions no longer exist. Education unions have the highest percentage of union membership with 39%. Only 12% of workers in all other areas belong to a union. Edwards stated that NEA cannot survive as a union if other unions fail. NEA has a working relationship with the AFT through four merged states and numerous merged local affiliates. NEA and AFT share more than 690,000 members. NEA has been working cooperatively with AFL-CIO and CTW (Change to Win) to further the cause of all workers, and has emerged as a central player in the labor movement.

Report compiled by Linda Somo

Happy Holidays to all!!!

Respectfully submitted by your NEA Directors:

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Important Reminders

Register for NEA Retired East or West Regional Conferences at www.nea.org/retired and click on the appropriate link

East Regional Conference: March 25-27, 2011
Omni William Penn Hotel, Pittsburgh, PA

West Regional Conference: April 9-11, 2011
Hyatt Regency-Tamaya Resort & Spa, Santa Ana Pueblo, NM (Albuquerque)

NEA Retired Grant applications due by February 15, 2011

NEA Retired award nominations due by April 15, 2011