Report of NEA-Retired Directors
NEA Board of Directors Meeting
May 5 – 8, 2011
Washington, DC

Thursday, May 5

After attending a legislative reception for all members Congress on Capitol Hill, your NEA-Retired Directors headed for House and Senate offices with their active colleagues to lobby their Congressional Delegations on three major topics:

- NEA believes that a reauthorized ESEA law should require collaboration at the local level on development of plans and making of decisions that impact teaching and learning. Each Senator & Representative was asked to support the idea of collaboration, and was also asked to co-sponsor one or more of the 57 NEA supported ESEA bills currently in Congress.
- NEA opposes tying an increase in the nation's debt limit to adoption of a cap on all federal spending that would force massive cuts to education, Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. Each member was asked to oppose such a cap.
- NEA is looking for co-sponsors and support for passage of the Annual National Classified School Employee of the Year Award Act.

Friday, May 6

President's Overview

President Van Roekel began the meeting by giving an overview of the business that the Board would cover during the two-day meeting. He also described his presence at the International Education Summit that was attended by representatives of 15 countries. Van Roekel stated that none of the other countries are using the types of "education reforms" being pushed in the United States, yet their students out-perform ours. For example, no other country utilizes high stakes testing.

Headline News

Dan Hand, Director, NEA Affiliate Learning & Effectiveness, reported that the department's website helps to provide up-to-date information and training for all state and local staff. The department has also revised the UniServ Intern training program,

Bill Raabe, Director, NEA Collective Bargaining & Member Advocacy, reported that the department has been focusing on pensions through collaborating with other advocacy groups, bill tracking, and disseminating information to members. The department continually updates the annual salary database, provides a useful database with continuing benchmarks for teacher salaries, and is collecting info on ESP salaries.

Ron Henderson, Director, NEA Research, reported on a new NEA publication called "*The Academic and Social Value of Ethnic Studies: A Research Review*", by Dr. Christine E. Sleeter. The department developed a toolkit called "Close Tax Loopholes First", and also enabled the official opening of the NEA Archives which houses the history of the NEA at the George Washington University library in DC.

Leona Hiraoka, Director, NEA Interactive Media, reported on social media to advance our goals, and the development of the website called "Classroom Superheroes". She described how the NEA twitter site and EdVoices website is helping to spread our message of great public schools.

Janet Dade, Director, NEA Information Technology Services, reported that NEA is keeping up with the advances in technology and the changing needs of state affiliates. For example, NEA is providing the technology that state affiliates need in order to switch members to EFT payments of dues.

Report of the Secretary Treasurer

Becky Pringle, NEA Secretary Treasurer, reported that membership continues to drop, with a total loss this year of 30,345. Although 22 states have had a membership increase, 40 states have experienced a membership loss. However, some bright spots are: Student membership has increased by over 3200, **Retired membership has increased by 9286,** and Higher Education membership has increased by 2359. Pringle stated that the budget is still in good shape with 41.67% of the year remaining and 48.03% of the budget remaining. Additionally, there is over $1.9 million remaining in contingency.

2011-2012 Modified Strategic Plan and Budget

John Stocks, NEA Deputy Executive Director, set the stage for a discussion of adjustments to the NEA budget by describing some of the stories of our members who were affected by the assaults on public education and unions in Wisconsin and across the country. He described the current reality for public school employees and our union which include attacks on collective bargaining rights, severe cuts in salaries, and loss of many thousands of jobs nationwide.

Becky Pringle, NEA Secretary Treasurer, **Lily Eskelsen,** NEA Vice-President, and members of the Budget Committee presented the Modified Strategic Plan and Budget for 2011-2012. With an anticipated loss of another 30,000 members next year due to retirements, lay-offs, etc., and the average salaries of members nationwide not rising, the dues for ESP members will stay the same at $96.50 and certified dues will only go up $2 to $168. That will yield $13.9 million less for the budget than was originally anticipated. Because of the lower anticipated funds and the unprecedented attacks on public education and public school employees, every tactic and activity was reviewed in light of the new reality. One of the goal areas where funding was increased was Goal Area 2, Priority Schools. The Priority Schools Campaign will be expanded to all states, even those that were not previously targeted. Goal areas directly affecting member advocacy and services will continue to receive approximately the same amounts, but the expenditures will be used more efficiently. Cuts are proposed to staff spending and governance, and by consolidating, shortening or eliminating some meetings.

Update on 2011 NEA Representative Assembly

The Board received an update on the 2011 Representative Assembly. The theme for this year is “Standing Strong”. The program and activities are built around this theme of solidarity and member advocacy. One hotel, the Hyatt Regency, does not yet have a signed contract with their union staff, so the NEA is taking steps to relocate the five states (and the Joint Conference) that were scheduled to be in that hotel. Delegates will again be asked to “go green” by using technology in place of paper materials whenever possible.

Action Items

The Board discussed the following items during the two-day meeting and voted to:

- Approve the proposed NEA Legislative Program and recommend adoption to the NEA RA
- Approve the nominations of the 2011 NEA RA Elections Committee
- Approve the recommendation to award the 2011 Friend of Education Award to the Wisconsin 14 (the 14 Democratic Senators who left the state in order to delay the adoption of laws that eliminated collective bargaining and cut funding to education)
- Oppose Standing Rule Amendment 1A which would require a statement of intent in addition to the rationale
- Oppose Standing Rule Amendment 2A which would require that a measure be tabled for at least two additional items if the chair requested that a proposed oral amendment be submitted in writing

- Support Standing Rule Amendment 3A which would modify the resolution submission practice during the RA, to streamline the procedures for considering resolutions and to clarify that only amendments to new resolutions or to resolution amendments are in order after 12:00 noon on the second day of the RA
- Approve the recommended UniServ grant of $37,048 per UniServ unit, with no rebate for this year
- Approve the Executive Committee recommendation to adopt the proposed NEA Harassment Policy
- Approve the recommendation of the Executive Committee to adopt the proposed amendments to the policy statements for submission to the 2011 RA for consideration and action
- Approve the Executive Committee recommended amendments to the guidelines for NEA Ballot Measures/Legislative Crises Fund
- Approve the Executive Committee's recommendation to accept the 2010-2011 NEA Standing and Advisory Committee recommendations as presented
- Approve the Executive Committee recommended editorial modifications to the Unified Legal Services program guidelines
- Elect Valerie Brown to serve on the Committee on New Business at the RA
- Elect Dan Quinn to serve on the NEA Fund For Children & Public Education Council
- Approve the amended guidelines for the Fund For Children & Public Education Council
- Approve the proposed Policy Statement on Teacher Evaluation and Accountability and recommend it for adoption at the 2011 NEA RA.
- Approve the proposed revisions to the 2011-2012 Strategic Plan and Budget
- Support the action of the NEA Fund Council to recommend President Barack Obama for re-election in 2012 and recommend adoption at the 2011 NEA RA

Report of the Vice President

Lily Eskelsen, NEA Vice President, talked about NEA's participation with the Creative Coalition that created a new movie entitled "That's What I Am". It is a coming-of-age story which follows a12-year-old, well-liked student who is put to the test when his English teacher pairs him up on a project with the school's biggest outcast, forcing the student to face the bullies and teasing head on and learn the teacher's final lesson: tolerance takes courage. Eskelsen also talked about depression as the silent illness, and often a silent killer. She thanked the Board for all the love and support that she and her family received during their personal family tragedy.

Report of the Executive Director

John Wilson, NEA Executive Director, reported that NEA has assisted state affiliates in advertising their requests for contributions to their state Foundations to help those states that have endured natural disasters. If a state does not have a Foundation, donations can be made through the NEA Foundation. NEA has been very involved in the development of the new Common Core Standards for reading and math. NEA members and practitioners helped to develop and write the standards. To read the Common Core Standards that have been adopted by states, go to www.corestandards.org.

Read Across America Report

Penni Cyr, NEA Board**, & Greg Johnson,** Executive Committee, reported on the activities of the Read Across America Day, including the kick-off at the Library of Congress where First Lady Michelle Obama joined other celebrities in reading to over 300 children. Executive Committee members visited schools throughout the country. A total of 48 million people nationwide participated in RAA activities, and over 7,000 news items resulted. Twitter, blogs, and other websites advertised the many activities, and the RAA link is the most popular area on the NEA website. Next year's RAA is scheduled for March 2, 2012. Budget cuts to the program in next year's budget will eliminate the traditional RAA calendar and other printed materials.

Saturday, May 7

2012-2014 Strategic Vision

John Stocks, Deputy Executive Director, set the stage for discussion of the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan & Budget by revisiting NEA's Mission, Vision, and Core Values. Our Mission is to advocate for education professionals and to unite our members and the nation to fulfill the promise of public education to prepare every student to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world. Our Vision is a great public school for every student. Our Core Values are: Professionalism, Collective Action, Partnership, Equal Opportunity, A Just Society, and Democracy. The Board spent time in small groups discussing within that mission, vision, and core values, what our strategies and tactics should be to accomplish our goals.

Report of the NEA Workgroup on Educator Excellence

Becky Pringle, Co-Chair of the NEA Workgroup, reported on the proposed Policy Statement on Teacher Evaluation and Accountability. The policy, which was developed by the NEA Workgroup on Educator Excellence, recommends that NEA call for the adoption of high quality teacher evaluation systems that provide regular, comprehensive, meaningful, and fair evaluations. In addition, it recommends that NEA both recognize the responsibility of all teachers to provide high quality instruction and call on school districts to provide teachers with the support, tools and working conditions they need to continuously enhance practice and tailor instructions. The policy recommends that NEA do so by adopting a broad policy framework for state and local reform efforts around evaluation and accountability, leaving to local collective bargaining or, where such bargaining is not available, state and local action, the specific choices about how to develop and implement teacher evaluation and accountability systems within that broad framework. The proposed policy statement calls for teachers to be evaluated based on the following three broad groups of indicators: indicators of teacher practice; indicators of teacher contribution and growth; and indicators of contribution to student learning and growth, which may include for the first time "valid, reliable, high quality standardized tests that provide meaningful information regarding student learning and growth" among other types of indicators. (See Board action on this item above)

Report of the General Counsel

Alice O'Brian, General Counsel, reported on numerous lawsuits. NEA assisted the Alabama Education Association in filing an injunction to stop the prohibition of payroll deduction of dues. The injunction was granted, but is now at a higher court. In AZ, the U.S. Ninth District Court of Appeals upheld a lower court's preliminary injunction prohibiting the core provisions of Arizona's anti-immigrant law from taking effect. The Buffalo Teachers Federation was dealt a major setback in its long-running effort to overturn, or limit, the 3-year wage freeze instituted by the Buffalo Control Board in 2003. On behalf of the BFT, the NEA will seek to re-open the federal case on the theory that Second Circuit's adverse decision on the impairment of contract claim was based on the Control Board's representation that the affected employees would be granted the step increases that accrued during the wage freeze. NEA filed suit on behave of the Idaho Education Association against SB 1108 which abolishes renewable contract status for all teachers (except those who already held that status as of Jan. 1, 2011), requires evaluations to be 50% based on "objective measures" of student growth, limits procedural challenges against discharge, requires two annual certifications of support by more than 50% of the members of the bargaining unit to retain bargaining rights, limits all collective bargaining agreements to one year, and provides that all existing agreements will expire as of June 30, 2011. The law also repeals the early retirement program for teachers. NEA is working with the Arizona Education Association to develop a legal challenge to the HB 1365 which prohibits public and private sector unions from receiving payroll deductions for member dues that used for "political purposes" – defined broadly to mean "supporting or opposing any candidate for public office, political party, referendum, initiative, political issue advocacy, political action committee or other similar group" – without members' express yearly written approval, making it almost impossible to have payroll deduction for members' dues. NEA provided assistance to: Connecticut regarding potential revisions to state tenure law; Indiana regarding proposed campaign-finance legislation; Maine regarding proposed collective-bargaining legislation; New Hampshire regarding proposed collective-

bargaining legislation; Ohio regarding legal protections and liabilities related to boycott activities; Texas regarding proposed legislation that prohibits the use of union dues for political purposes; Wisconsin regarding pending and anticipated litigation challenges to the Budget Repair Bill; and New Jersey regarding successfully resolving a domain name dispute involving www.njea.com.

Asian American and Pacific Islander Observance

Daphne Kwok, Chair of the President Obama's Advisory Committee on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, was the guest speaker for the API Observance. Kwok serves as the "eyes and ears" of the API community. The most recent US census has shown that Asian Americans are the fastest growing population in the US. Our demographics are changing rapidly. Nearly half the Western states are composed of a majority minority population. Unfortunately, our increasing multi-culturalism has spurred anti-immigrant/anti-minority feelings and legislation, and the proliferation of stereotypes. Having to battle stereotypes in 2011 is exactly why it's so important for educators and parents to start teaching diversity in the early grades. No matter how well Asian students speak English, how long they've been in this country, or how much they assimilate, they are seen as perpetual foreigners, and therefore not real Americans. People from all backgrounds are what make America, America.

Small Group Discussions

The Board participated in small group discussions to begin prioritizing the 2012-2014 Strategic Plan & Budget, and to provide input on how Board meetings are run.

The Board meeting ended Saturday with a touching tribute to John Wilson who is retiring in July, and will be replaced by John Stocks. After the meeting, there was a lovely reception to honor John Wilson in the atrium of the NEA building.

Report compiled by Linda Somo

Respectfully submitted by your NEA Directors:

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Important Reminders

Register for NEA Retired Annual Meeting
at www.nea.org/retired and click on the appropriate link
June 27 – 29, 2011
Swissotel, Chicago IL

Sign up as an education advocate at www.EducationVotes.NEA.org

The NEA Toolkit for protecting pensions is now available through the NEA.org website. Use the search window at the top of the NEA.org website to locate "Retirement Protection".