



NEA's First In-Person and Virtual RA

Registration dates, for in-person and virtual delegates and attendees

- Delegate Registration will be from May 31st through June 15th.
- Late Delegate Registration will be from June 16th through noon CDT on July 5th. Late Delegates (those registering after June 15th) will need to contact RASupport@nea.org to get the correct link to register.
- Staff and the NEA Member Non-Delegate registration will open on June 1st and close at noon on July 6th.
- All participants who register after June 15th, will have to attend as virtual participants.
- A delegate can switch from virtual to in-person if the switch is on or before June 15th and the state in-person capacity limit has not been reached.
- A delegate can switch from in-person to virtual up to noon on July 6th. However, if the switch occurs after June 15th, the delegate will lose the option to participate in the mail-in ballot elections because the deadline for being included in the ballot mailing will have passed.
- All registration changes will need to be done by NEA, and the delegate will need to submit the request to RASupport@nea.org.

Guests:

- Non-members of the NEA or affiliate staff will not be able to attend this year.
- NEA member-non delegates are welcome to participate virtually. They will be able to register by using the registration link on nea.org/ra available as of June 1, 2022.

Childcare will be available for in person delegates. The information will be shared with state coordinators and posted on the website as soon as it is finalized.

Transportation:

There will be transportation to and from state delegate hotels to the convention center.

Exhibit

Space: There will not be Exhibit space this year.

Elections: In-person members will vote during the Representative Assembly. Delegates participating virtually will mail-in paper ballots.

How do I find items within NEA.org?

Can't find something on NEA.org? Look for the magnifying glass on the left navigation panel. Clicking on the magnifying glass gives you the ability to search. You can also go to nea.org/search.

How will delegates access the 2022 Business Items and PAC?

The 2022 business items and PAC information will require a log-in. Delegates will need a valid email and Cvent registration number to log in. Your NEA Membership ID will not work. Some RA information will not require log-in. The agenda, candidates for office, logistics, the rules, and World of Information (WOI) will be public so that delegates can access them before registration opens.

How will delegates vote on the RA floor? For voting on the RA floor, delegates will need to have a personal device such as a tablet, smartphone, computer, or iPad that can access the internet. A battery pack will be given to each in person delegate to maintain power. Delegates are asked not to stream content to ensure everyone can access the voting platform and the service is free for delegates. There will be adequate bandwidth as long as delegates are not streaming.

Caucuses and Special Meetings

There will be rooms for caucuses and states that need them. Special interest meeting rooms will be provided on a first-come-first-serve basis.

State affiliates will decide how state caucus meetings are conducted.

They are subject to the Standing Rules requirements.

NEA has advised that state affiliates carefully consider in consultation with their counsel whether some workable virtual option is provided to delegates that would allow them to participate in state caucuses. NEA has offered to assist in covering the expenses associated with providing a virtual option.

2022 REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

Joy, Justice, Excellence - The Strength of Educators. The Brilliance of Students. The Power of Community

RA Purpose:

- As the highest governing body of the National Education Association, this representative body will learn, deliberate, provide guidance and take action to advance the NEA mission and strategic vision in keeping with our Core Values.

RA Goals:

- Provide NEA RA delegates with the knowledge, support, materials and an effective and efficient process to make informed decisions on important issues at the 2022 RA.
- Prepare delegates to lead on adopted NEA strategic objectives throughout the 2022-2023 year.

2022 Representative Assembly (In-Person w/virtual option)
 July 3-6 | McCormick Place, Chicago, IL
 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. CST - In-person with a Virtual Option

RA In-person attendance capacity: 6,000 | **RA Website for all things RA-related** (www.nea.org/RA)

- Standing Rules; Constitution, Bylaws, Policies, Resolutions, Legislative Amendments; and New Business; Highlights; Resources

Registration:

- Registration Opens: May 31, 2022
- Registration Closes: June 15, 2022

RA Delegate Check-In:

- In-person delegates
- McCormick Place, Chicago IL
 - Saturday, July 2 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
 - Sunday, July 3rd from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM
 - Monday, July 4th from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
 - Tuesday, July 5th from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM
 - Wednesday, July 6th from 9:00 AM to Noon

Virtual delegates

- Online via CVENT registration system

Hotel Information:

- RA state hotel assignments posted on www.nea.org/ra.
- Although single occupancy might be ideal, the decision to move to double occupancy is at the discretion of the state affiliate. If your state wishes to pursue double occupancy, please be sure to consult with your state's general counsel for guidance.

What are the finalized COVID protocols, and when will they be available to share with delegates?

The final COVID guidelines are posted on the RA delegate website. NEA will provide COVID tests. If a delegate tests positive, a separate room will be available for individuals to isolate. States should confer with their Counsel regarding liability forms to use with delegates who are at risk of infection of COVID.

There is no RA app needed this year. The new [RA webpage](http://www.nea.org/RA) is phone friendly so a separate app will not be necessary. The website is available now. Text messages will be sent to delegates for important RA updates.



Legislative Committee Report



McCann

Legislative Committee chair, Shannon McCann (WA), in her final Legislative Committee report to the Board of Directors, detailed how the NEA Legislative Committee held four listening sessions from February through May, so that all NEA members had an opportunity to be heard on relevant issues, and bring suggested amendments forward for consideration and development with the assistance of committee members. The committee often works outside of regularly scheduled NEA Board meetings to develop new legislative amendments for inclusion in the NEA Legislative Program. Those amendments, when adopted, help direct the NEA government relations team in progressing and expanding the policy influence of the union. One of the new legislative amendments that came out of the listening sessions asks that the “NEA supports federal initiatives to create guaranteed housing for all people, despite income level.” Legislative Program was unanimously supported by the NEA Board of Directors

The pre-RA legislative hearing will occur on June 30th, and McCann invited and encouraged all RA delegates to get directly involved in the process and submit amendments to the Legislative Program so that the NEA can expand its influence on all issues that are important to NEA members and students.

Uniserv Review Committee Report



Kerekes

Uniserv Committee Chair, Brian Kerekes, gave his final report. In it, he reiterated the uncertainty that COVID and the economic environment are causing NEA’s budget projections. While the committee made a recommendation to maintain the grant amount from last year at \$41,166, he stressed that this was only possible by utilizing the reserve for the Uniserv Fund. Kerekes stressed that one of the factors in determining the amount was the slight increase in the number of grants being requested by affiliates: “First affiliates are loathed to reduce Uniserv Staffing because of the adverse impact on members and affiliates. Additionally, affiliates who can do so will often seek additional Uniserv grants... to increase the capacity of membership and grow.” The best way to maintain and increase the grant amount in the future is to continue to organize potential members nationwide.

The final update concerned work to generate a document on best practices for hiring a diverse Uniserv workforce. Kerekes described the effort being led by a cross-center team at NEA, along with Uniserv staff: “...the goal is to provide affiliate leaders with the tools they need to intentionally review their recruitment, screening and hiring practices to improve their ability to attract and retain a more diverse Uniserv field staff.” The NEA expects to distribute the final document to affiliates this summer.



Think Tank Reports

Each of the facilitators who reported thanked their committee members by recognizing them and also the staff and executive committee members who gave their time, insight, and wisdom to the work of each think tank.

Enterprise-wide Vision for Leadership Development System

Members discussed being leaders, their leadership journeys, and what current leaders can do to support those leaders after us. Participants spent four meetings developing what we need to do this work. The main themes that came forward are to have a clear purpose, have a plan of action, and to be solution-oriented.

Future of Organizing

Organizing moments are like teaching, moments. Organizers have to be cognizant and able to step into those opportunities. Organizing is about a goal. It’s about accomplishment. It’s about being able to get something done when it is needed. It’s about value and year-round organizing. Organizing must be different according to the group, the time, the opportunity, and the challenge.

Safe and Just Schools

The first meeting focused on building community, understanding, purpose, and goals for the think tank. The second meeting focused on honesty in education and voting rights. The third meeting focused on emotional learning and mental health. The team prioritized connecting issues and answering guiding questions. It was truly inspiring.

Reimagining the Future of Public Education

Themes throughout the work include raising the voice of educators, students, and the community. Many people are impacted by our work. The current narrative is eliminating public education as a right. We reimagine education in a way that ensures that every child, who wants to go to higher education can. That means money and resources. It also means making sure that educators have what they need in the field. Students and families value education because they’re involved in the process. Educators need to be treated as professionals to have an entire public education system that shifts outcomes and results for everyone.



“I Will Say ‘Gay’ All Day”



Director Bill Farmer (IL), LGBTQ+ Board Caucus chair, introduced the LGBTQ+ observance in the midst of a hostile climate for students and educators across the country.

House but has hit a wall in the Senate. Across the nation, more than 300 anti-LGBTQ+ bills have been introduced or are pending in state legislative sessions. Rangel encouraged members to reach out to their Representatives urging them to oppose these bills and provide NEA updates on anti-LGBTQ+ bills introduced in their states.

Keira McNett from NEA's Office of General Counsel also provided a legal update. McNett shared that the 2020 *Bostock vs Clayton County* ruling clarified that under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, discrimination “based on sex” includes “sexual orientation” and “gender identity.” The Biden Administration’s Department of Education has affirmed its support of LGBTQ+ students and provides resources for this work on its [website](#). McNett also emphasized that most legal rulings regarding anti-LGBTQ+ laws are siding with the rights of students, including the 2021 ruling from Judge Goodwin regarding a West Virginia anti-trans athlete law. Judge Goodwin wrote in his ruling, “[C]lassifying human beings in ways that officially sanction harm is antithetical to democracy.” For more information on anti-LGBTQ+ laws across the nation, visit the [Movement Advancement Project](#).

NEA President Becky Pringle introduced the LGBTQ+ Observance by citing data from the 2021 [Trevor Project survey](#): “[Nearly] 45% of our LGBTQ+ students have considered attempted suicide.” She continued, “Our fight for LGBTQ rights IS a priority of NEA.”

Executive Committee member Mark Jewell is the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Committee liaison. He introduced the co-chairs of the NEA LGBTQ+ Caucus, Emily Osterling (OH) and Frank Burger (MI). This caucus provided every NEA Board member an [“I’m Here” badge](#), adding to the over 40,000 that have been distributed to educators across the nation. Jewell also introduced the LGBTQ+ Board Caucus chair, Bill Farmer (IL). He shared that one of his former students was a staffer in one of the Congressional offices he visited during May Super Week. When he lobbied for support of the [Safe Schools Improvement Act](#), his former student shared how much his advocacy for racial and social justice meant to her—and many other students.

Farmer’s call, “I will say ‘gay’ all day” served as a transition to Juan Rangel, NEA Government Relations staff member who provided a legislative update. While there was a great deal of optimism at the beginning of the Biden administration, slim margins in the House and Senate have slowed progress. The Equality Act would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to include sexual orientation and gender identity. It passed in the

President Pringle ended the observance with four specific calls to action:

- Sign up for LGBTQ+ NEA EdJustice updates: <https://neacedjustice.org/lgbtqi-pledge/>
- Take action to support the Equality Act: <https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/action-center/take-action/pass-equality-act>
- Use the information in NEA’s [“What Educators Should Know about LGBTQ+ Rights”](#) to advocate for every student
- Make your support visible by joining our Equality without Exception: Pride Month of Action by introducing a [school board resolution](#) in June to show support for LGBTQ+ youth and educators.

The Power of the Collective in Action

Local voice is the lifeblood of the NEA, and President Pringle has convened a group of local presidents who are serving on the NEA Board to make sure she is getting feedback from the ground

The radical right has been banning books and taking honesty out of education. In response,

President Pringle has been meeting with staff and legislative leaders on the Hill to strategize around the urgent action to combat disinformation about what is happening in our nation’s classrooms and the need to teach the full and accurate history of America.

Pringle has continued her Joy, Justice, and Excellence tour, including a stop in Minnesota, where educators have shown the power of collective bargaining, by striking for better conditions for students and themselves. She highlighted the power and importance of collec-



tive bargaining in Virginia and Pennsylvania and visited classrooms in Arizona.

President Pringle has been active in Washington DC as well, leading the push to approve Ketanji Brown Jackson’s nomination to the Supreme Court and participating in a panel celebrating female activists in celebration of Coretta Scott King’s 95th birthday.



Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islanders Observance



Attendees of the NEA Board of Directors May meeting were treated to an inspiring and moving presentation honoring Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander's (AANHPI) Heritage Month.

Tavie Samuelu, Executive Director of Empowering Pacific Islander Communities (EPIC), gave the observance. EPIC is this year's recipient of NEA's Ellison S. Onizuka Memorial Award.

Samuelu began by expressing the Samoan idea of *Telanoa*, which can mean "talk story" or, more literally, to open something up. Samuelu said her preferred definition is a dialogue to reach equilibrium. She said that much of the world is imbalanced and recognized NEA's work to address some of that imbalance. Samuelu recommends *Telanoa* as a practice to help restore balance. Returning to balance should be the object of the words we use, particularly in the context of land and place. Samuelu quoted the Samoan poet Terisa Siagatonu: "When people ask me where I'm from, they don't believe me when I say 'water.'" To ask an AANHPI person where they are from is a violent act, she said, implying a perpetual foreignness. Any answers, she said, never seem to be sufficient.

"When we say 'we are from water,' is to acknowledge our indigeneity," she said. "We are not on the land, we are of the land."

Everywhere we are, we are on Indigenous land. Samuelu said. Our work to restore equilibrium must go beyond acknowledgment. It must move on to returning land to dispossessed peoples who know best how to be its stewards.

Samuelu said that in a geopolitical context, the homes of AANHPI people have been defined by militarization and colonialism. Many Pacific Islanders continue to be impacted by



Tavie Samuelu, Executive Director of EPIC shares the importance of words and story.

several decades of nuclear testing conducted by the United States. While some Pacific Islanders are US citizens, others live on islands with no relationship with the United States.

"But, because of how empire works, they are very familiar with us," she said. American Samoa is the only American soil you can be born on and not be a US citizen, she said.

Samuelu presented some elements of Pacific Islander - particularly Tongan and Samoan - culture through several proverbs. One, translated as "No one is more," conveys the value of equality among persons. Fishing villages will evenly distribute their catch among all in the village so that no one goes without, she said. In other endeavors, it signifies that a person is no more important than others in the community, particularly those who have shaped them as people.

Samuelu gave another that struck a chord with those assembled: the pathway to leadership is through service.

"We do not have leaders who do not work," she said.

E fofo e le alamea le alamea - You possess all you need - emphasizes that what the community needs have to come from that community.

Samuelu said that she appreciates proverbs because it gives context and access to wisdom "People keep calling things unprecedented; there's a proverb for everything," she said.

Jodi Kunimitsu, NEA Ethnic Minority Director and chair of NEA's AAPI Caucus, who had introduced Samuelu, concluded the observance with the singing of "*Oli Mahalo*," a Native Hawaiian song of thanksgiving.

NEA President Becky Pringle noted that the Pacific Islander portion of the AAPI community has endured disparities in access to higher education and health care. She noted that Pacific Islanders and Native Hawaiians have been impacted by COVID at twice the average of the AANHPI population as a whole and had the highest infection rates of any group in 17 states.

"Pacific Islanders are often overlooked and thus underrepresented in the places where decisions are being made," Pringle said.

Samuelu said the outsized impact of COVID was inevitable given Pacific Islanders' inability to access systems that could help them.

She said one of the most difficult parts of the pandemic is the inability to conduct burial rites, depriving families and communities of a sense of closure

"Ceremony is the muscle memory of grief," she said.

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

The NEA Board acts as a trustee over the organization's assets. Fiduciary responsibility includes remaining objective, responsible, unselfish, honest, and efficient. The Board must act for the good of the organization. Approval of the budget to ensure it supports the association's mission, vision, and goals starts with the Strategic Plan and Budget Committee and follows by approval by the Board before it is voted on by RA Delegates. The exercise of reasonable care in all decisions applies at all levels of leadership - local, state, and national. Board fiduciary duty is extensive.

This year has seen a decline in active ESP membership, but overall numbers are up. ESP members can earn more outside of education settings, which has resulted in many people leaving the field. An increase in retired and aspiring educators has helped boost membership numbers. Year-round organizing began, then covid hit. The direct results of year-round membership recruitment are evident with overall growth in member numbers. There are 2,899,283 current members (up 5,727 since Janu-

ary). This year NEA held a Year-Round Organizing Conference with 49 state affiliates and 295 people in attendance. The conference addressed a culture of change, including learning to listen, learning the interconnection of membership and politics, learning about people willing to support each other, and learning how to connect potential members with the people around them. Additional resources about connecting with members and recruiting can be found at: www.nea.org/yro.

NEA Secretary-Treasurer Noel Candelaria shared success stories from different states including Alabama, where educators won a 4% pay raise across the board for all education employees (pre-K - HE, inc. ESP). The raises range from 5% to 21% depending on years of service and include 1% yearly steps. This is the largest education budget in state history. The \$8.26 ETF budget was signed by the governor in a red state.



Candelaria



The Friend of Education Award Goes To . . .

Angie Powers (KS) moved the 2022 NEA Friend of Education Award winner to the Board of Directors on behalf of the committee chair Tara Flaherty (CT). This award is NEA's "highest honor recognizing an individual, organization, or group for significantly contributing to the advancement of public education." The Board voted to approve Dolly Parton as this year's award winner.

Parton is a tireless advocate for education since 1988 when she formed her Dollywood



Foundation. Just one of the Dollywood Foundation's projects is the [Imagination Library](#), a book gifting program that mails free, high-quality books to children from birth to age five. Since its inception, the Imagination Library has gifted over 167 million books to children across the world. Her inspiration for the Imagination Library was her father, who was unable to read. Shortly before he died he told her that The Imagination Library was the most important thing she has ever done.

Parton continues to support her hometown. She funds scholarships for students who "have a dream they wish to pursue and who can suc-

cessfully communicate their plan and commitment to realize their dreams."

At the beginning of 2022, Parton launched GROW U, which will pay tuition, fees, and books for employees' education, including seasonal, part-time, and full-time workers. The program fully funds 100 programs and partially funds 150 additional programs.

Dolly Parton once said, "You'll never do a whole lot unless you're brave enough to try." She has done a whole lot to support education for people in her hometown, her company, and around the world.

"When I was growing up in the hills of East Tennessee, I knew my dreams would come true. I know there are children in your community with their own dreams. They dream of becoming a doctor or an inventor or a minister. Who knows, maybe there is a little girl whose dream is to be a writer and singer.

The seeds of these dreams are often found in books and the seeds you help plant in your community can grow across the world."

NEA's Friend of Education, Dolly Parton, Gives The Gift Of Literacy: A Library Of 100 Million Books.

Report of General Counsel Alice O'Brien



NEA General Counsel
Alice O'Brien

NEA General Counsel Alice O'Brien began her report by discussing various attacks on inclusive education, showing the board a map with the various types of legislation on the books, including anti-honesty in education, parental notification, and the various forms of "don't say gay". She also reported that, according to PEN America, 40 percent of book banning requests are coming from state and local politicians and target stories highlighting Black, Latinx, Native American, and LGBT+ protagonists. Says O'Brien: "It's not a separate issue from the attacks on honesty in education. It's not a separate issue from the 'don't say gay' measures. It's all one and the same."

NEA has created guidance including:

- [What Educators Should Know about LGBTQ+ Rights](#)
- [What You Need to Know About Florida's "Don't Say Gay or Trans" Bill](#)
- [NEA Harassment and Discrimination Toolkit](#)

O'Brien reminded the Board the three ways we can fight this is to defeat the issues, (members of the Indiana State Teachers Association fought back and defeated an anti-honesty in education measure), educate members about the limits of the laws (by standing for inclusive education in your classrooms, schools, and communities), and finally by litigating in court. She stated that 53% of students are students of color and that students need to see themselves in the curriculum. Each state had standards supporting teaching inclusive education, and members must

advocate for the continual improvement of those standards. The best thing to do now to help remedy this kind of legislation is to advocate at the school level, and by going to school board meetings.

O'Brien then directed the Board's attention to the recently leaked draft opinion from the Supreme Court that would overturn *Roe v. Wade*. The *Dobbs* case, regarding a statute in Mississippi that outlaws abortions after 15 weeks, was heard by the Court in December. It appears that The Supreme Court is poised to strike down *Roe*, although they won't formally announce their ruling until sometime in June. This is one consequence of the Trump administration's stacking of the court at all levels. O'Brien said 1 in 4 women will seek an abortion in their childbearing years. Using NEA's membership as an example, she said that equated to about 600,000 members. Many women who seek an abortion are in their late 20s, and are either at or just over the poverty line. Overturning *Roe* would disproportionately impact poor women, Black, Latinx, and Native American women. O'Brien said, "It exacerbates all those existing systematic, racial, and socioeconomic inequalities in this country by putting out of reach a basic health care choice for those women." By overturning *Roe*, The Court is leaving abortion restrictions up to states.

Finally, O'Brien used some of the reasoning laid out in the draft opinion to tie together several landmark decisions and issues. The reasoning used in the draft opinion to undermine women's health care rights is the same reasoning that justifies the right to contraception, legal interracial marriages, and legal same-sex marriages.

It's important to remember that NEA has stood for reproductive freedom since 1978, as outlined in NEA bylaws and legislative program. There could be issues where a member is targeted or even terminated for taking leave to cross state lines to get an abortion. O'Brien said in her closing remarks, "That is why NEA has stood for reproductive freedom. We continue to stand for reproductive freedom. Those choices are individual. They are choices that only a woman and her family can make. And that is what we stand for."



Building NEA Organizational Capacity

Innovating, Connecting, and Standing Tall

Executive Director Kim Anderson addressed the Board by reminding us that our work is impactful. Federal lobbying and activism of the Board, state presidents, and other members have made many wins possible. Anderson highlighted the work that aligns with President Pringle's priority goals for this year including each state affiliate's work to secure and utilize American Rescue Plan funds, continued advocacy to keep students and members safe during the pandemic, creation of a Policy Statement on safe and equitable schools, the historic confirmation of Ketanji Brown Jackson, engagement with local school boards, and so much more.

Anderson outlined NEA's three powerful cultural transformations. The first is "innovating through dynamic alignment", including the membership lab, employing tools that allow potential members to join by phone or online, a mobile app for NEA360, and various data modeling tools. Joining by phone has increased membership density in Maryland, Alaska, New Mexico, Las Vegas, and Seattle. The second transformation is "making data actionable". In Utah, UEA created the 'Every Action Petition', which got over 35,000 signatures, leading to the withdrawal of an anti-CRT bill in Utah's state government and recruiting new members. Mississippi created a "Hustle two-step", which used Hustle to contact potential members and ask them to contact their governor, then sent a follow up to those who acted, resulting in 57 new members. Anderson also described the student debt relief team's work. Potential members were given information about the student debt campaign, then later received an ask to join, resulting in 681 new members.

The final transformation is "innovation in professional excellence". Anderson said that NEA is now one of the largest funders of innovation in professional excellence, awarding over \$56 million since 2013. In 2022 alone, over \$6.4 million was awarded to 11 affiliates for work in outreach, racial and social justice, mentoring and professional development, safe and equitable learning environments, educator retention, and professional excellence.



Executive Director Kim Anderson celebrates NEA work across the enterprise.

Read Across America Ambassador Marley Dias continues her collaboration with NEA to emphasize the importance of reading, especially diverse authors and texts. For Black History month, Dias shared what *Brown Girl Dreaming* means to her and discussed with young adult author Jason Reynolds the [universality of black stories](#) and [portrayals of black characters](#). She also partnered with the National Alliance on Mental Illness to explore [the role reading plays in mental health](#). Her advocacy will continue at Harvard University next year.

Stay tuned for the [2022-2023 digital calendar, which will be available for download in August](#). Until then, watch for the new poster that will be available at the NEA Conference on Racial and Social Justice.



Ballot Measures

Two Ballot Measure/Legislative Crisis Fund requests were made for the upcoming year for work that is being done in state affiliates. These requests are approved by the NEA Board of Directors any time more than \$500,000 is requested by a state affiliate in the fiscal year.

One funding request was focused on passing a ballot measure in Massachusetts to pass the "Fair Share Amendment". The Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) has already committed a considerable amount to the initiative, which seeks to create a more progressive income tax system that would help fund public education in the state. The additional funding from the Fund would allow MTA and its partner coalition to strengthen the campaign through targeted organization and communication with voters.

The second Ballot Measure Fund request was from South Dakota, which ironically is seeking funding to protect the right for South Dakotans to have funded ballot measures adopted by the state. Currently, it takes only a simple majority of voters to make any ballot measure law, but if passed, any new measures in the state would require a 60% supermajority to be adopted. South Dakota Education Association (SDEA), in partnership with several other coalition partners, hopes to influence the campaign through a strategic media campaign that targets voters before the June primary.

Read Across America

Christina Bohringer (VA) informed the NEA Board of Directors about the year-round Read Across America program. Social media continues to be an effective tool for connecting with millions of members, students, and stakeholders across the world. The engagements connected members with the many resources on the [Read Across America website](#), including book lists and event ideas.

Read Across America Ambassador Activities

Read Across America Ambassador **Marley Dias** continues to help NEA keep reading and Read Across America on the calendar throughout the year:



Hosted a video interview with acclaimed author Jason Reynolds focused on the importance of diversity in books promoted during **Black Lives Matter At School** Week of Action and for Black History Month.



In conjunction with NAMI, produced a video promoting **Mental Health Awareness Month** and the role reading plays in good mental health.



In partnership with the GrassROOTS Community Foundation, supported **Read Across Jamaica** efforts to combat learning loss and boost access to diverse books island and presented the Book Industry Association of Jamaica with a \$10,000 USD donation from Read Across America.



NEA Today
May 8 at 12:38 PM
For Mental Health Awareness Month, take a tip from Read Across America Ambassador Marley Dias and pick up a book!



Capitol Hill Lobbying Visits

NEA Directors spend Thursday of super week lobbying members of Congress about NEA's legislative priorities. This week Directors focused on the following topics for discussion with Senators and Representatives:

Education Shortage: Teacher, Principal, and Leader Residency Access Act (S. 3171 / H.R. 32444) – to provide the in-classroom experiences and community that can keep aspiring educators in the profession. The bill provides eligibility for financial support currently available to interns and other related education programs. Often student teachers are restricted from a second job while student teaching, are ineligible for work-study funds, are paying for course credit hours related to the experience, and are financially responsible for housing, etc. The year-long residency student teaching programs extend the financial burden faced by students and push marginalized and non-traditional students out of the profession.

Educators Expense Deduction Modernization Act (S. 3992 / H.R. 7395) – to quadruple the amount educators can deduct from their taxes for out-of-pocket school expenses (raise from \$250 to \$1000).

Teacher Debt Relief Act (H.R. 6898) – to allow simultaneous enrollment in the Teacher Loan Forgiveness (TLF) and the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) programs. Current or previous enrollees in TLF cannot count five years of service towards PSLF. As a result, anyone in the earlier TLF program must complete 15 years of service to qualify for PSLF, whereas those only enrolling in PSLF must complete 10 years of service for eligibility.

Safe School Improvement Act (S. 2410 / H.R. 4402) – addresses the adoption of codes of conduct that specifically prohibit bullying and harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and religion. Enacts restorative discipline practices and includes data collection and reporting on bullying and harassment.

Safe, Just and Equitable Schools

The work began by convening a task force to use their collective expertise to create a clear vision of safe, just, and equitable schools that would help create an association-wide movement to transform public education.

The task force consisted of members of state governance, NCUEA, EMAC, SOGI, Legislative Committee, ESP, K12, higher education, aspiring educators, and retired. Also included were community activists and local presidents with an eye toward geographic representation and political diversity.

It became very clear that the only way to achieve the scope of the work outlined in NBI-A was to go beyond amending the original 2016 discipline and school the prison pipeline policy statement and completely rewrite it. The newly crafted proposed policy statement on safe, just, equitable schools is very intentional in making sure every educational community was affirmed in the language. Students



can't have safe, just, thriving schools without culturally competent educators who are well versed in restorative justice philosophy. Communities need to work together to eliminate the criminalization of students and disparities in disciplinary and behavioral policies that systematically disenfranchise the nation's most marginalized students. The NEA seeks to build power by building coalitions to fulfill the vision for safe, just, and thriving schools.

The Executive Committee moved to transmit the policy statement as presented to the Representative Assembly, which the Board passed.

[See the document here.](#)

National Teachers Hall of Fame Inductees for 2020 and 2022

Founded in 1989 to celebrate educators, the museum was built in Kansas and includes a museum and teacher resource center for pre-k through 12th-grade students. Five inductees from across the country are chosen each year. The museum includes a national memorial for fallen educators.

Inductees for 2020: Andrew Beiter (NY), Dr. Melissa Collins (TN), Donna Gradel (OK), Thomas Knab (NY), Jamil Siddiqui (MA)

Inductees for 2022: Sergio de Alba (CA), Robert Fenster (NJ), Leila Kubesch (OH), Kareem Neal (AZ), Christopher Poulos (CT).

National Teacher Hall of Fame Lifetime Achievement Award: Dr. Mary Hatwood Futrell (3rd award in 30 years). She is a former NEA president and has 6 decades of teaching experience.



Thank You

Thank you to the NEA Board Directors who worked so hard to put together this newsletter

Writers:

Angie Powers (KS), Ami Prichard (CO), Brian Kerekes (FL), Chris Early (OR), Julie Rivera Horwin (Retired), Kevin Deely (PA), Marcia Mackay (MI)

Editors:

Ami Prichard (CO), Brian Kerekes (FL)

Layout:

Ami Prichard (CO)

If you are a Board Director and would like to join the team for our next meeting, please contact Ami Prichard.

