Teacher Salaries Increase by 8.8 Percent
Still More Work to Do

This past September, Governor Dennis Daugaard announced that the average teacher salary in South Dakota has moved up. According to the data gathered by the South Dakota Department of Education, the state's average teacher salary for the 2016-2017 had increased to $45,625 from $41,940, which is an 8.8 percent increase. SDEA President Mary McCorkle is encouraged by the numbers, but acknowledges that there is still a lot of work to do to meet the state target of $48,500.

“SDEA is pleased that the dollars from the half-cent sales tax increase are making their way to teacher salaries. We are moving in the right direction, but we still haven’t met the goal of $48,500,” said McCorkle. “South Dakota continues to lag behind our neighboring states that are also struggling to attract and retain teachers, so while the work of the Blue-Ribbon Task Force set us on the right path, we still have some catching up to do.”

According to the last publication of the NEA Rankings and Estimates, South Dakota’s teacher salaries have finally moved out of 51st place. The new average pushes the state above West Virginia that sits at 49, trailed by Oklahoma and Mississippi. The numbers also suggest SD still lags behind our neighbors by about $5,000. North Dakota had an average teacher salary of $50,479, Montana $51,034, Nebraska $51,386, Iowa $54, 416, Minnesota $56,913 and Wyoming $58,140.

“It is good to finally be out of last place. It has been decades since our teachers have been able to say SD salaries were not at the bottom, but being at 49 as opposed to 51 won’t magically solve all of our recruitment and retention challenges, especially when you consider that all of our neighbors are facing shortages as well,” said McCorkle. “We can’t move forward and then stand still. Our neighboring states are also seeing an up-tick in their average salaries, so we have to keep fighting to keep up.”

News in October that 36 school districts failed to meet one or both accountability requirements has also caused concern. The SD Department of Education sent letters to those districts informing of the failure to meet both accountability requirements per the 2016 Teacher Compensation Package. A total of 36 schools missed at least one of the accountability requirements under the 2016 teacher compensation legislation. Of the 36, only two missed both: Herried and New Underwood. Herried had an average increase of $6,739 and New Underwood average increase came in at $4,480.

Districts did a better job meeting the requirement of raising the average teacher salary by 85 percent of a district’s percentage increase. Only six missed this target: Herried, New Underwood, Corsica Stickney, Hoven, Kadoka Area and White River. These six were relatively close to meeting this requirement. New Underwood missed this mark by the most at two-percent. A retirement or other change to the staff may account for why these small school districts missed this goal.

The districts that failed to meet at least one of the accountability targets appeared to have struggled with the requirement to spend 85 percent of their new funds on teacher compensation. However, 16 of the 32 districts missing this target failed by 2 percent or less. These districts may have had an unexpected change in student enrollment or again,
Still More Work to Do…

It is official! We no longer hold the distinction of being 51st in teacher pay. Our average teacher salary has risen 8.6 percent to $48,625. Currently, West Virginia, Oklahoma, and Mississippi trail us. Many of us never thought this would happen—but it did. And it happened because of the unified voice of educators. The question now is what’s next? Is there more work to do? The answer is a resounding yes. The average salary is still below the state’s target of $46,500 and we have districts that struggle to find teachers for their students. We’ve made progress, but the finish line is still in the distance. The teacher shortage didn’t magically disappear with the pumping in of much needed revenue in our districts. SDEA will continue to work at the state level to make sure the progress we have made does not come to a halt, but there is more… We have work to do at the local level as well.

Our power comes from individual members coming together to make a difference for their communities, colleagues and most importantly, students. The place where we have the most power to make a direct impact on our schools and students is at home—at the local level. You and your colleagues in your buildings know best what your students need. Together, you can be change agents for your students, but you need to lead. The teacher shortage didn’t magically disappear with the pumping in of much needed revenue in our districts. SDEA will continue to work at the state level to make sure the progress we have made does not come to a halt, but there is more… We have work to do at the local level as well. Our power comes from individual members coming together to make a difference for their communities, colleagues and most importantly, students. The place where we have the most power to make a direct impact on our schools and students is at home—at the local level. You and your colleagues in your buildings know best what your students need. Together, you can be change agents for your students, but you need to lead. The Association accomplished a great deal in 2016 with the passage of the teacher compensation package. It was important and gave many a sense of respect for the profession. The work is not done. Respect and the ability to move an agenda begin at home in your local association. The work is incredibly important and provides the most direct opportunity to make a difference for our students. Thank you for everything that you do for SDEA, your local association, your school and your students. You make a difference every day in the lives of our students.

Rachel Schaefer, on being named the 2018 South Dakota Teacher of the Year!

CONGRATULATIONS

to Elkton Kindergarten Teacher, Rachel Schaefer, on being named the 2018 South Dakota Teacher of the Year!
For the next eight days, she and her fellow educators visited the cities of Beijing and Xian. She experienced a rich culture that put less emphasis on technology and more on tradition and spending time with elders. “Although many technology devices are manufactured in China, we saw very few people walking around talking or texting on their phones,” said Mikkelson. “Children were not seen with electronics to keep them entertained. Instead of meeting for coffee, elderly men and women meet each morning in area parks for exercise groups which helps them stay fit and flexible.”

The Chinese government assigns a high value to education beginning with preschool at the age of two or three. The teachers visited one of the top five middle schools in Beijing. Mikkelson said the students stay together in a classroom for three years and teachers rotate to prevent fewer discipline issues. “We were unable to visit the middle school classrooms, since students were studying for the country’s most competitive exam which determines if students are college-bound. Parents influence what their children do consequently, teachers are highly respected and many want to enter the profession, ” said Mikkelson. “In China, beginning teachers make $1000 per month in cities, but rural teachers are treated like volunteers where they do not make much money. Therefore, rural teachers do not stay long before they move into the cities. Teachers of older grades make more money, so teachers begin in primary grades and apply every five years to teach a higher grade. Education is viewed as extremely important; consequently, teachers are highly respected and many want to enter the profession,” said Mikkelson. “Parents influence what their children do after school which likely includes studying.” The fellowship group visited places like the Yonghe Lama Temple, the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, Summer Palace, and the Temple of Heaven. “My most surreal experience was hiking on the Great Wall of China. What an incredible way to experience the natural beauty of China! We had to stop often to do a reality check and catch our breath!” They group also biked Xian City Wall, which is the most complete wall in China. What an incredible way to experience the natural beauty of China.

The fellowship group visited places like the Yonghe Lama Temple, the Forbidden City, Tiananmen Square, Summer Palace, and the Temple of Heaven. “My most surreal experience was hiking on the Great Wall of China. What an incredible way to experience the natural beauty of China! We had to stop often to do a reality check and catch our breath!” They group also biked Xian City Wall, which is the most complete wall in China. What an incredible way to experience the natural beauty of China.

Through the NEA Foundation Global Learning Fellowship, educators develop the knowledge and skills that integrate global competency into their daily classroom instruction, advocate for global competency in their schools and districts, and help students to thrive in an increasingly interconnected world. Fellows transform their classrooms to give students a global perspective. “This experience has given me the opportunity to integrate global content into core instruction throughout the school year. It all began with a year of global lesson planning and thinking about how to peak second graders’ curiosity about the world, which included expanding units with meaningful global activities,” said Mikkelson. “Interacting with colleagues from around the United States helped me think about global learning from the perspectives of teachers teaching in different grades and schools. Integrating technology into my lessons has been a priority, but now we will be connecting globally with technology using WorldVuze, ePals, and Skype. Even after more than 20 years in the classroom and many years devoted to teaching students to think globally, I can truly say my first international adventure changed my life.”

The NEA Foundation Global Learning Fellowship offers educators 12 months of professional development. The NEA Foundation staff, partners, and field experts support Global Learning Fellows as they participate in online coursework, webinars, and peer learning communities, including a two-day professional development workshop in Washington, DC.

“Being an NEA Foundation Global Fellow gave me the opportunity to reexamine my own identity and become more open to seeing the world in a new way. This amazing program made it possible to connect with educators and students from around the world to learn and collaborate. I encourage others to take the chance to venture out of your classroom and explore this amazing world we live in!”

To read SDEA’s full Q&A with Mikkelson about her experience in China, visit www.sdea.org.

Questions or Concerns
Contact a UniServ Director today!

Fran Linn
Western UniServ Director
605-324-8968
frances.linn@sdea.org

Loren Paul
Plains UniServ Director
800-529-0090 ext. 131 | 605-342-9263
loren.paul@sdea.org

Dolores Tufaro
Educators Guiding Learners UniServ Director
800-529-0090 ext. 510 | 605-339-3236
dolores.tufaro@sdea.org

Ryan Rolfs
Eastern Prairie UniServ Director
800-529-0090 ext. 211 | 605-339-3236
ryan.rolfs@sdea.org

Kara Hoines
SouthEast Educators UniServ Director
800-529-0090 ext. 212 | 605-339-3236
kara.hoines@sdea.org

Questions? Contact: Sandra Waltman
Director of Communications and Government Relations
411 E. Capitol | Pierre, SD 57501
800-529-0090 ext. 128 | 605-224-9263 ext. 128 | sandra.waltman@sdea.org
Hello! I’m Bobbi Schmidt from White River. I belong to our local ESP at the White River School District. I’m currently in the start of my fourth year of being the Elementary Secretary and my 11th year of being part of the White River School District. I joined the ESP 13 years ago and have held various offices. This is my 11th year as our locals’ president. Joining our local has been a huge experience for myself. I have had the privilege to attend three national conferences! I originally joined to belong to a professional organization. I wanted to be a voice in the making of our negotiations and take advantage of SDEA benefits. The best experience I have had is attending the national conferences and all the wonderful workshops!

Matt has been a member of AEA (Aberdeen Education Association) and SDEA for 13 years. He is currently a kindergarten teacher and coach in Aberdeen. He joined SDEA/AEA to be part of something BIGGER than teaching and his classroom! What was the best part of joining SDEA? According to Matt, “That is easy! The people in SDEA and in other local groups. It is awesome to meet and learn from so many educators!”

Members from across the state spent time brushing up on their skills at one of two Leadership Conferences hosted by SDEA. The Saturday conferences, hosted in Sioux Falls and Rapid City, were an opportunity for local leaders to think about their leadership structures, the work they do, and how they involve others the work of their local association. Participants also took time to practice one on one conversations and reflect on their membership campaigns and yearlong plans. The goal for the sessions was to help build capacity at the local level.

These conferences are not the last opportunity for members to build their leadership skills. Local leaders should mark their calendars for July 23–25. SDEA will host the 2018 SDEA Presidents Retreat in Chamberlain. For more information, contact the SDEA office at 800-529-0090.

Visit sdea.org for more member spotlights.
We would love to see your class create one of two ornaments for the SDEA Christmas tree at the State Capitol! In addition to the ornaments created by area students, SDEA will also decorate the tree with school supplies that will be donated to students in need after the holiday season. Ornament deadline is November 15.

Please send your ornaments to:
South Dakota Education Association
411 East Capitol Avenue
Pierre, SD 57501

Visit www.sdea.org for school bus tutorials and printable bus parts.

SDEA/NEA's ESP Award

SDEA/NEA’s ESP Award recognizes the contributions of Education Support Professionals (ESPs) to their schools, communities, and their profession. The award is presented to a member of SDEA/NEA who demonstrates outstanding accomplishments and reflects the contributions of ESP to public education.

Deadline: November 26, 2017

SDEA/NEA Educational Innovation Grants

The SDEA/NEA Educational Innovation Grant Program provides grants to members in support of innovative educational and student-oriented projects. The grant program funds new member-led projects. It does not fund projects on an on-going basis. The SDEA/NEA Educational Innovation Grants give preference to proposals that address student achievement, cultural diversity issues, include community partnerships, and can be duplicated by others.

Deadline: May 1, 2018

Additional grants from the NEA can be found at www.neafoundation.org

What’s Landing in Your K-12 Inbox?

How many times in your life have you been asked to provide an email address? Perhaps you set up an online profile for banking or an internet service such as Netflix. Did you use your K12 email address? Do you have an Outlook.com account or Gmail account? Often educators think using one email address is more convenient, but using your K12 email account for anything other than your school work has many pitfalls.

Here are just a few:
1. Your emails can be seen by the school administration. Any information contained in an email may be considered fair game for an administrator to use against you.
2. The servers that house your K12 emails are owned by the taxpayers and they could possibly be subject to a Freedom of Information Act Request.
3. It makes it more difficult to keep your work life separate from your personal life.
4. If you leave your current job, you may not be able to access the email account or any profiles linked to it.
5. Conducting any political or union activity may be frowned upon by your administrators and elected officials.

While having a separate personal account may not be as convenient, it is the best way to keep your personal life private. Free accounts are available through services such as Gmail, Yahoo, or Outlook.com. SDEA also requests members to provide a non-K12 address to the local and state association. SDEA members can provide a non-K12 email address by visiting myNEA360.org and creating a profile.

Awards, Grants & the Election

2018 SDEA/NEA Election

Board of Directors
January 15, 2018, is the last day to notify Mary McCorkle, SDEA/NEA President of your declaration to run for an SDEA Officer position, At-large Board of Director position, or as a state-funded delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly.

ESP At-Large (1) 2-year term
Minority At-Large (1) 2-year term
Western (1) 2-year term
Plains (1) 2-year term
EGL (1) 2-year term
Eastern Prairie (2) 2-year terms
SEE (1) 2-year term

Note: Please include a 50-word statement of why you are running for the Board of Directors positions. In addition to a statement, please submit a photo.

NEA RA Delegate

Members who wish to serve as a delegate to the 2018 NEA RA must indicate whether they want to be on the ballot as a state delegate and/or as a unit delegate. The NEA annual meeting will be held June 30–July 5 in Minneapolis, MN.

SDEA/NEA Educational Innovation Grants

Additional grants from the NEA can be found at www.neafoundation.org
It’s that time of year again — Fall, and in my opinion, the best season of the year.

Though it is the ‘dues due’ season with all that entails, it means the ‘heat’ of the summer is gone, and no more lawns to mow. Fall is the prime time for planning.

Speaking of ‘dues’, thus far the returns this year seem to be about ‘normal’. Approximately 40% of our Annual dues have been paid, and approximately 54% of our Life members have paid. Paid membership means benefits stay in effect.

Speaking of dues — for those of you who have yet to do so, PLEASE send your annual and/or local dues to: PO Box 62, Pierre, SD, 57501.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO INFORM US of ANY CHANGES you have in your addresses, names, e-mails, etc. The biggest challenge is simply to keep our records accurate and current.

If you have been using a “school” e-mail address, remember too, it becomes null and void as soon as you retire, so — please furnish us your current, valid ‘personal’ or ‘home’ e-mail address.

EPIC (Educators Political Involvement Committee) contributions seem about ‘normal’ too. It is really important to remember that EPIC contributions can only be used in ‘local’ and ‘state’ races and are entirely voluntary. None of these funds can be used for national campaigns. SDEA-Retired has a seat on the board that decides to whom SDEA gives contributions and rest assured much care and analysis goes into our bipartisan support of candidates who will support educational goals.

The ‘computer’ was — “somehow & magically” — able to select a winner in the 2018-2019 local dues drawing.

This year, you were in the ‘drawing’ if your local dues were received by the end of September. James Zeman, a longtime member, former SDEA Board Member and Professor at Northern was the computer’s choice this fall.

Again this year, a grant was submitted to NEA to fund Pre-Retirement Informational Seminars. As of this writing we have heard nothing back, but we hope to hear soon. These seminars have proven to be very successfully received and highly rated by those attending.

The dual purpose is to provide planning information and to increase our membership. Keep your fingers crossed we get this year's grant.

In a perusal of the NEA benefits website (start at neamb.com) I came across some very good ideas and deals. I personally managed to save significant amount of money using the site.

Let us help you buy or refinance a home

Receive an award from Wells Fargo!

Eligible NEA members and their family members who purchase or refinance a home through the NEA Home Financing Program®, with financing provided by Wells Fargo Home Mortgage, will receive a My Mortgage Gift® award after closing — $500 for buying a home, or $300 for refinancing your home for participating retail SM.

Contact us today by calling the NEA Home Financing Program at 1-800-541-2105 or visit us online at www.neamb.com/hf

NEA, NEA Member Benefits and the NEA Member Benefits logo are registered service marks of NEA Member Benefits Corporation.

1. The NEA Home Financing Program has been developed for NEA members and their families. Parents, spouse or domestic partner, and children are eligible family members.

2. Eligible individuals can receive the Wells Fargo My Mortgage Gift® award approximately 6 weeks after closing on a new purchase or refinance loan secured for a primary residence with Wells Fargo Home Mortgage ("New Loan"), subject to qualification, approval and closing.

3. The Wells Fargo My Mortgage Gift®SM award is not available with The Relocation Mortgage Program® or to any Wells Fargo Home MortgageSM recipient.

4. The Wells Fargo My Mortgage Gift®SM award approximately 6 weeks after closing on a new purchase or refinance loan secured for a primary residence with Wells Fargo Home Mortgage ("New Loan"), subject to qualification, approval and closing.

5. Wells Fargo Home Mortgage has a services agreement with NEA’s Member Benefit Corporation in which NEA’s Member Benefit Corporation receives a financial benefit for providing agreed upon services. You are encouraged to shop around to ensure you are receiving the best mortgage program and loan terms that fit your home financing needs. Information is accurate as of date of printing and is subject to change without notice.

Wells Fargo Home Mortgage is a division of Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. © 2017 Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. All rights reserved. NMLS ID 395961 | #108185 REV 6/17

June 8, 2017
June 19, 2017
July 22, 2017

June 8, 2017
June 19, 2017
July 22, 2017
# UPCOMING EVENTS

## November 2017

- **4**: Plains Meeting @ Pierre office
- **10**: Veterans' Day observed – offices closed
- **13**: American Education Week – National Kickoff
- **14**: American Education Week – Parents Day
- **14**: SEE Meeting @ Beresford
- **15**: American Education Week – ESP Day
- **16**: American Education Week – Educator of a Day
- **17**: American Education Week – Substitute Educators Day
- **19**: SDEA Board Conference Call
- **20**: Western Meeting @ Rapid City SDEA – 5:30pm
- **23**: Thanksgiving – offices closed
- **24**: Thanksgiving break – offices closed
- **28**: SDEA/NEA ESP of the Year — nomination deadline

## December 2017

- **25–30**: Christmas break – offices closed