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Vision
We envision valued education professionals providing quality public education for all students.

Mission
South Dakota Education Association ensures the collective voice for South Dakota public education professionals.
This has been a busy school year, and while that is always true for those of us who work in a public school, this year the workload seems to be overwhelming. There is a lack of substitute teachers, many unfilled classified and clerical positions, and more work to help our students get back on track from the disruptions of the last two years. We are clearly not back to normal.

I have had many conversations with our members who are becoming overwhelmed by the work they are taking on to fill the gaps. More times than not, educators are not being compensated for this extra work and are being told that nobody else is available to do this work, so you must do it. This environment is not sustainable for educators or our students. The question is what can we do about it?

The good news is that I believe we can change the current situation, but it means that all of us will have to find a little extra room on our very full plates to get more involved in the decision-making process for our schools and state. That’s a tough ask, I know, but if we don’t change it, who will?

At the local level, school board members must hear from educators about the conditions in the schools they oversee. Let’s be clear; unsustainable workloads are not good for our students. School boards must be open to a discussion about how we can make things better for everyone. This means that our local associations need to have members at all school board meetings. You can help your local leaders by offering to attend school board meetings.

If it doesn’t appear that your local school board is willing to listen to or address your concerns, maybe it’s time to engage parents and other community allies to talk about what is going on. Building partnerships with allies can be a very powerful tool in creating change. And if they still won’t listen, maybe it’s time to recruit and support candidates in the next school board election. Now is the time to start to organize and if we all take a little part, we can truly make a difference.

I know some of you are not comfortable with “politics” but the truth is that every single decision that is made about our schools, our working conditions and our students’ learning conditions is a political decision made by people who are elected. As educators, we must start engaging elected officials at every level to have meaningful conversations about what is happening in our schools. If we don’t, who will? I know this is a tall ask, but it is an important ask. Why? Because our students’ future depends on it.

It is truly an honor to represent the educators of our state. You amaze me everyday with your dedication and determination to help your students. Thank you, and I look forward to seeing you soon.

Loren Paul
SDEA President
605-224-9263, ext 116
loren.paul@sdea.org
When I think back at my elementary school experiences with Thanksgiving, I remember learning about how Native Americans shared their foods with the newly landed Europeans, and in turn the settlers of Plymouth Rock invited Native Americans to come to their village and share in a feast of goodwill and gratitude. This story was perpetuated with songs, poems, and plays. Anybody else remember dividing up into pilgrims and Native Americans and making hats and accessories from paper to bring the parts to life?

There is research to support that Native Americans did, in fact, share vital foods and resources with European settlers. Some researchers believe that early colonists would not have survived those early years without the support of America’s First People, in particular, the Wampanoag people who lived and flourished in the Plymouth Rock area. However, what

DON’T perpetuate the myth of the Thanksgiving feast, where Native Americans were invited to a hunky dory homecooked meal.

DO share the truth about interactions between British colonists and the Wampanoag people.

DON’T appropriate traditional Native American clothing with paper bag vests and construction paper feathered headbands.

DO use this opportunity for students to learn about Wampanoag people who still exist today.

DON’T use terms like “Indians” and “Pilgrims;” which are not accurate and can be divisive.

DO share about the importance of the harvest, including corn, beans, and squash—the “three sisters” who were important crops for many Native American peoples.

A Word from Our NEA Director

Dana Livermont

Dana is a certified school counselor and K-12 specialist with the SD Statewide Family Engagement Center who serves as your representative on the NEA Board of Directors. She is passionate about organizing around issues and equity for students in South Dakota. Twitter @theDanamyte

Thanksgiving

Check out: https://bit.ly/3kH0DyP

— continued to page 11
The Value of Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings in South Dakota Classrooms

The debate about South Dakota’s Social Studies standards has shined a light on the Oceti Sakowin [oh-CHEH-tee shaw-KOH-we] Essential Understandings (OSEUs) which were developed after the Indian Education Act of 2007. Oceti Sakowin means “Seven Council Fires” and refers collectively to the Lakota, Dakota and Nakota people and Oceti Sakowin culture is based in oral tradition. It is through the lens of this tradition that a group of tribal members and educators developed the seven essential understandings. The goal is to combat the rise of intolerance and conflict in society by promoting appreciation and understanding of our differences. OSEUs use existing state standards in your content area.

However, the legislation didn’t mandate the implementation of the standards and schools have been slow to implement them as a part of the curriculum. SDEA has joined with the South Dakota Department of Education and Technology & Innovation in Education (TIE) to help promote the WoLakota Project, which is a partnership between TIE and the SD Department of Education. The Project aims to improve learning opportunities for all students, Native and Non-Native, in South Dakota.

Still many educators are unsure how to incorporate the OSEUs into their classroom. There hasn’t been much training on the essential understandings and many educators may not feel comfortable teaching something they don’t fully understand. However, some educators have fully embraced the essential understandings and SDEA asked them to share their advice for teachers who want to bring the OSEUs to their classrooms. Here are some of their thoughts:

**Briefly describe how you use the OSEUs or the WoLakota Project in Your Classroom?**

*The Oceti Sakowin Essential Understandings provide the framework for our Native American Connections Curriculum. They are tied to our learning targets from 6th to 8th Grade. For example, with OSEU 1, students appreciate the peoples’ connection to the land — “the original land base and natural resources...were under communal stewardship prior to immigrant settlement.” This Understanding applies to the Lakota/*
Dakota Creation stories, Tribal Sovereignty and Reservations, Treaties with the United States, and many other topics in our curriculum.

Taylor Rodgers – Native American Connections Class, Sioux Falls Edison Middle School

I use the videos and links to other sites daily to help with social emotional skills, science, social studies, or art and reading.

Cindy Homan – Spring Creek Elementary Todd County

I use a lot of resources that other teachers have created and the WoLakota project to do instruction in the classroom. The resources are invaluable. The students receive the material well, and the variety of forms keep students engaged through videos and activities.

Tim Easter – Lakota/Dakota language instructor and Middle School Native American Connections teacher for the Sioux Falls School District.

Why is it important to incorporate the OSEUs in your classroom?

The OSEUs were developed by a core group of educators and experts of South Dakota in Oceti Sakowin culture, history, and traditions. Sioux Falls teacher, Ann Robertson, was part of the committee that identified the core concepts that guide our instruction. Native students in our schools deserve a culturally relevant and accurate education, and the OSEUs were curated to meet those objectives.

Taylor Rodgers – Native American Connections Class, Sioux Falls Edison Middle School

It is part of South Dakota’s history and culture. It helps my students identify their personal history and understand today’s world better. It allows them to connect with history in a way that creates a deeper understanding and pride in their ancestors.

Cindy Homan – Spring Creek Elementary Todd County

I think to get a more accurate and a better picture of Native American history. It isn’t going away it is our history. I don’t think it is going away and the presentation needs to be accurate. By using the OSEUs it is organized and accurate. It allows for teachers to feel confident that the resources are researched and accurate to give student’s an understanding of this important part of South Dakota’s history. It allows for a whole picture of South Dakota from the perspective that is important for all our students.

Tim Easter – Lakota/Dakota language instructor and Middle School Native American Connections teacher for the Sioux Falls School District.

— continued to page 10
Retaining Classified Staff: How the Brookings Education Association Hopes a New Peer Mentorship Program Will Keep More Employees in the District

School Districts across the state are struggling to attract and retain educators including support staff. Even if districts find individuals to fill these positions, they struggle to keep them. So, when ESP members of the Brookings Education Association (BEA) learned of an NEA grant program aimed at supporting classified staff, they took action.

The NEA’s Education Support Professionals: “Supporting Our Own Through Peer Mentoring” provides training and resources for locals to create peer mentoring programs for ESP members. Brookings was recently accepted into the program.

Now local leaders including Tammy Herrick, a paraprofessional at Mickelson Middle School, have participated in a nine-week course that guides them through the process of launching a program as well as learning how to teach others to be a mentor. Once the BEA team has submitted its final report, they will be fully certified and ready to take the next steps in their efforts to retain staff.

Herrick says the goal is to help those new to the district have access to more information and supports to help them be more successful in their jobs. “We want new hires to have information that may be overlooked by administration such as how sick leave works, what happens on snow days, how to use the copier or log into their programs, these are a few things we want addressed,” said Herrick.

The Brookings plan calls for each mentor to be paired with two mentees. “They will meet at least twice a month in person, [with] zoom and any other way that works. What they discuss and work on will be documented through a journal, survey or other data collecting procedures,” said Herrick.

Staff who wish to be mentors will go through an application process to ensure they are the right fit for the program. Upon being selected, new mentors will be given a day of training along with the resources they will need to support their mentees. “We will supply them with handbooks, and training guides to use to document how the program is going.”

BEA’s goal is to have the pilot program ready to go at Mickelson Middle School for the 2022-2023
Gordon Horgen Memorial Scholarship
The South Dakota Education Association/NEA is calling for applications for the Gordon Horgen Memorial Scholarship, which is awarded to Native American students who are planning on entering the teaching profession. This scholarship was created by the 2014 Representative Assembly to honor the late Gordon Horgen from Winner.
The Association may annually award up to four $750 scholarships for each academic year. The scholarships are open to Native American high school seniors or college sophomores who are planning to enter the teaching profession.
Deadline: February 15

Ramia Boersma Scholarship
The South Dakota Education Association/NEA awards scholarships to outstanding students who are planning on entering the teaching profession. The Association may annually award up to three $750 scholarships for each academic year.
Deadline: February 15

SDEA/NEA Early Career Educator Award
An individual member or a local may nominate an early career educator for this award. Each governance unit may select an Early Career Educator of the Year from nominations submitted in their unit. All the unit winners will be candidates for the statewide award, which will be announced at the 2021 Representative Assembly in Pierre.
Deadline: December 1

SDEA/NEA Educational Innovation Grant
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

For more information on all grants and awards offered by SDEA, visit SDEA.org.
What advice do you have for other teachers who want to start incorporating the OSEUs in their classrooms?

The OSEUs are important to understanding Oceti Sakowin perspectives on many topics. Teachers who wish to incorporate the Understandings should take some time to familiarize themselves with those standards. They are easily accessible on the SDEA website. Care should then be taken to find materials from qualified sources such as Lakota scholar Craig Howe and author Joseph Marshall III. Additionally, I would encourage consultation with any of the NAC teachers in our middle or high schools on how to effectively address the OSEUs. We are familiar with these Understandings and can advise how to apply them in a culturally appropriate way. By using these Understandings correctly, all South Dakota K-12 students can learn about the lives, culture, and history of the Oceti Sakowin.

Taylor Rodgers – Native American Connections Class – Sioux Falls Edison Middle School

Start with the videos and build upon what your students have questions about. There are wonderful books that add to this curriculum, from “In the Footsteps of Crazy Horse” to many other indigenous authors. My students have loved learning and craved more information about the topics presented from the videos. Check out the links that go with it there is a wonderful array of information to choose from just get started. You won’t regret it!

Cindy Homan – Spring Creek Elementary Todd County

The biggest one is to not be afraid to do it. All too often there are teachers that truly want to use the OSEUs but are afraid of not doing it correctly or getting something wrong. Therefore, it is a lot easier to not do it. My advice is to ask questions if they aren’t sure about a part, but to lean in and do it. There are a ton of resources like the WoLakota project that can help you do it accurately. Even if you make mistakes, give it a shot because giving exposure and starting to implement the OSEUs is very important exposure for students, even if there are stumbles along the way.

Tim Easter – Lakota/Dakota language instructor and Middle School Native American Connections teacher for the Sioux Falls School District.

Check out these free resources and lesson plans to incorporation OSEU into your classroom.

https://bit.ly/3CbqqVx
followed this celebrated event is nothing to celebrate about—attacks on Native American culture, a gradual loss of land, and an unfathomable loss of lives.

Imagine how your Native American students are feeling as you talk about Thanksgiving in your classrooms. Are they feeling honored and respected? Or are they wondering why the version of Thanksgiving shared at their school doesn’t align with the pain and mourning felt by their families?

As educators, we have a responsibility to teach the truth to our students, free from agenda. I know that some of you may feel uncomfortable shifting the way we talk about Thanksgiving, either due to the intense political climate around teaching Social Studies or a lack of confidence in teaching Native American content in a culturally sensitive way. The very least we can do is to stop perpetuating the myth of Thanksgiving in the way that I and many others learned it. An easy shift is to focus on the word Thanksgiving and celebrate gratitude, something that we can all benefit from.

—I continued from page 5

I encourage you to check out NEA’s resources around Thanksgiving, including how to shift the way we talk about Thanksgiving and resources for lessons.

SDEA Advocacy Corner: Plans of Assistance

October and November mark the start of the school year when most plans of assistance are issued to teachers. It is very important for educators to take plans of assistance seriously when they are issued, and to contact their SDEA UniServ Director when they’ve been given notice that they will be placed on a plan of assistance. An educator on a plan of assistance is required to satisfy that plan. SDEA can work with you and members in your local to make sure that any plans of assistance are constructed in a way that can demonstrate growth and provide protection from potential job actions, like nonrenewal.

Plans of assistance should meet three criteria:

1. Each directive must be measurable. (It should be clear how success will be measured.)
2. Each directive must be achievable in the timeframe given. (The work can be accomplished reasonably on top of the normal teaching workload.)
3. Each directive must be objective. (This does NOT mean that everyone is being treated the same way, but it does mean that others in a similar situation would be treated the same way. For instance, a plan of assistance might require that lesson plans be turned in weekly even though not all teachers are required to do this.)

Plans of assistance should contain, at a minimum, these elements:

A statement of the observed deficiency(ies) with examples given to demonstrate deficiency. This description should also include which domain(s) and component(s) of the Danielson Model are in question.

- Specific directives to address the deficiency(ies).
- A timeline for the plan of assistance to be completed.
- A description of the district’s offer of assistance in completing the plan.
- Provision for periodic meetings to ascertain progress.

Always check to see if your Board policy or negotiated agreement has additional criteria regarding plans of assistance. You may want to consider bargaining specific forms to be used in the event a plan of assistance becomes necessary. Contact your UniServ Director for help developing a form for your next negotiations.

Questions or Concerns
Contact a UniServ Director today!
605-224-9263
School Year with it lasting at least two years. They are applying for an NEA grant to launch their pilot mentoring program; however, the school district would like to see the program become part of the master contract language and to help make it sustainable beyond the life of the grant. “We are looking for a program to last for at least one year for all new Teacher Assistant and Behavior Tech hires or those that have transferred to another building. There is no clear end date as we are looking to have them be in the program for at least the first school year and hopefully into the second. We would like to see the mentees become mentors.” Mentees will also be asked to do an exit interview regardless of the reason they leave.

While Herrick and BEA are still in the planning process, she recommends that other locals explore participating in the program. “We need to have support from each other and guidance. I know when I started, I had no clue and was always afraid to ask or wondered if I was doing things correctly. The program will inspire teamwork and the development of leaders in a field that is dwindling. Something has to change so that individuals will want to stay in their position, this is only one step in making that happen”.

To learn more visit: https://bit.ly/3Fo31ST
Board of Directors Positions

OFFICER:
Treasurer (1) 3-year

BOARD:
COHE At-Large (1) 1-year
Western (1) 2-year
(2) 1-year
EGL (1) 2-year
Plains (1) 2-year
SEE (1) 2-year
(1) 1-year
Eastern Prairie (2) 2-year

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 candidate photo.

2022 NEA RA Delegate Positions

Western 2
EGL 1
Plains 1
SEE 1
Eastern Prairie 2
Minority At-Large** 1
At-Large 5

** this position represents SDEA’s ethnic minority members but is open to any active or active-ESP member

Note: Please include a 50-word statement of why you are running for delegate to the NEA RA.

January 15, 2022 is the last day to notify Loren Paul, SDEA/NEA President, of your intent to run for SDEA Board of Director position, At-large Board of Director position, or as a state-funded delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly.

Bylaw proposals are due January 15, 2022.

Members who wish to serve as a delegate to the 2022 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 July 2 – July 6. Candidate declarations are due January 15, 2022.

You may contact SDEA President, Loren Paul, at Loren.Paul@sdea.org or the SDEA Board of Directors’ Election Staff Liaison, Anne Plooster, at Anne.Plooster@sdea.org.

Return completed forms by one of the following methods:

Mail:
SDEA President
Attn: Elections
411 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501

Scan & Email:
Loren.Paul@sdea.org
or
Anne.Plooster@sdea.org

All necessary election forms and policies may be found online at www.sdea.org.
Mark Your Calendars for...

SDEA.org

IT’S ABOUT OUR KIDS.

SDEA
South Dakota Education Association

SUMMER ACADEMY

July 18 – 19, 2022
University of Sioux Falls

SDEA is hosting its inaugural Summer Academy next summer in Sioux Falls. This is your one-stop shop for all SDEA’s trainings. Tracks include Professional Development, Early Career Educators, Membership and Leadership. Offerings will include sessions for Education Support Professionals and Higher Education members. SDEA encourages each local to bring a team to ensure you can access all these great sessions.

Registration will Start in January

See You in July!
Educators Rising: Getting Students Excited About a Future in Education

Like almost every other state, South Dakota is facing a shortage of educators. Almost every school district is reporting an unusual number of vacancies. With a growing student population, how will South Dakota meet the education demand in the future? How can we encourage high school and college students to go into education? One answer may be to grow Educators Rising across the state.

Educators Rising is a Career and Technical Education program with a goal of inspiring high school and college students to serve their communities by going into the field of education. There have been 22 chapters launched in South Dakota in the last four years, and this program maybe the key to getting students, such as Harrisburg Senior Ainsley Plack, excited about the education profession.

Plack, who is the Harrisburg Educators Rising President, says the program has helped her discover all the different possibilities the education field has to offer. “I think I always knew that I wanted to be a teacher, but I didn’t realize how many different options you had if you went into education. Through Educators Rising I have gotten to explore the many different roles you can play in a school,” said Plack “You can teach so many different things especially at the high school level. You can also be a social worker or a counselor. There are so many different things you can do.”

Harrisburg was one of the first districts to offer Educators Rising – Tracy Kern, who is a Family and Consumer Science Teacher and Educators Rising Advisory, launched one of the first chapters in the state – she tells students who are interested in joining that if they stick with her and the program they will know if education is the field for them. “It is better to know when it isn’t costing you anything, and those who stick with me end up very excited about going into education.”

Kern insists that the program will have no financial barriers for kids. “We don’t charge our students anything to belong. The Booster Club has helped us, and the State Educators Rising Board has worked with the state’s universities to create many opportunities that don’t cost the students anything. There are minimal costs to the districts, but the state board helps pay for everything else including the students’ national dues.”

This is made possible by some dedicated volunteers at the state level, including Travis Lape who is the Innovative Programs Director for the Harrisburg School District.
and the State Coordinator for Educators Rising. Unlike other states where the program is housed in the state’s education department, South Dakota is an all-volunteer organization. Lape says through partnerships with the state’s universities and other groups such as SDEA, School Administrators and ASBSD, the program can offer participating students many rich opportunities to see if the education profession is right for them.

One such opportunity is the Regional Expos, which happen at university campuses that have an education program. There the students get to interact with the school of education faculty. “It’s more than a campus visit. The students get to meet with the education program faculty and get a real feel for the program and what it will be like,” said Lape. “The universities provide the meals and do all the logistics because they are excited to have the students there as well.”

Educators Rising also hosts a state conference where students showcase the skills they have learned throughout the program. Competitions include Lesson Planning and Delivery for Arts, Career and Technical Education, Humanities and STEM, Children’s Literature where students write a book, Creative Lecture (TED Talk), and Ethical Dilemma (team).

“Starting a chapter is easy. The first thing you need to do is get your administration on board and then design a program that meets your community needs,” said Lape. “You don’t have to be a large district. It doesn’t matter if you have 90 students or 1900 students, you just have to be creative. The program was designed to give the chapter flexibility. If you only have a student or two in your program, we can help connect you to other small chapters. It really is what you want to make it.”

Kern’s advice to educators or schools who are thinking about starting a chapter, “Just do it. It doesn’t really cost the district. We are always complaining that we don’t have enough teachers. Educators Rising is the best way to get kids excited about teaching.”

Plack’s advice to students who are thinking about joining an Educators Rising Chapter is the same as Kern’s, “just do it.” “You will quickly learn if education is for you or if it is not. If teaching is for you, Educators Rising will get you excited and get you thinking and prepared.”

SDEA is partnering with Educators Rising to encourage members and community leaders to start chapters in more local school districts. If you are interested in starting an Educator Rising Chapter in your school, contact South Dakota Coordinator:

**Travis Lape**
605-743-2567 x 3392
travis.lape@k12.sd.us
What Say You?
SDEA Asks and You Answer.

In each issue of the Educators Advocate, our team will pose a question to our members, and we will share some of the best answers in the next issue. Over the summer, we asked some of your fellow educators the following question and here is what they had to say:

What is the best tip you have ever received to accommodate your students on an IEP?

"Enlarge the font on the screen and on worksheets."
Steve O’Brien
Reading Interventionist
Watertown High School

"When you give directions to the class have them repeat them back to you."
Cindy Haase
Kindergarten
Hamlin County School

"This is a really tough question to answer because as classroom teachers we are accommodating on the fly all the time-things we do-we don’t even think of as accommodations anymore."
LouAnn Jensen
Former classroom teacher
EGL UniServ Director

Question for our next issue...
If you could have one person living or dead sub/shadow in your classroom who would it be? Why?
SDEA-Retired Educators, in association with NEA-Retired, is monitoring the progress of important legislation at the state and national levels concerning public education policy, curriculum issues, and retirement security.

We are also coordinating our communications and actions with SDEA leadership, especially with possible lobbying activities in the upcoming session of the South Dakota legislature. Please be alert to the need for our retired members to participate with lobbying activities at the Capitol, should the need arise.

We will keep everyone informed through our newsletters, monthly emails, and Facebook page, as well as direct communications from our SDEA-Retired liaison, listed below.

Which again is a reminder to keep us updated with postal and email addresses and phone numbers when a change in your status occurs.

**APPROACHING RETIREMENT?**

Current SDEA active members can participate with SDEA-Retired through a Pre-Retired Life membership, which also ensures a smooth transition of official status when that magic day comes.

**Contact info:**

SDEA-Retired Liaison: Philip.Moore@sdea.org
SDEA Leadership: sdearetirededucators@outlook.com

Facebook page: “sdea retired educators”

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**LOBBY LINE: The Latest News from the State Capitol**

Get the latest developments, action alerts and breaking news from the SDEA Lobby Team at the South Dakota State Capitol.

[www.sdea.org/lobbyline](http://www.sdea.org/lobbyline)
# UPCOMING EVENTS

## November
- 21 SDEA Board Zoom meeting
- 25 Thanksgiving (SDEA offices closed)
- 26 Thanksgiving observed (SDEA offices closed)

## December
- 4 SDEA Budget Committee Meeting
- 22–1/1 Christmas vacation (SDEA offices closed)

## January
- 11 First Day of SD Legislature / State of the State
- 11 SEE Unit meeting @ Yankton
- 13 Eastern Prairie Unit meeting via Zoom
- 17 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (SDEA offices closed)
- 17 Western Unit meeting
- 21–22 SDEA Board Meeting
- 23 SDEA Budget Committee Meeting