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New SDEA President and New Legislators Face Big Education Challenges and New Opportunities

When legislators arrive in Pierre this January, there will be many new faces trying to tackle challenges of public education in the state. Of the 105 legislators, 21 will be newly elected and only two of those will have prior legislative experience. Some say the number of new lawmakers can make it a challenge to get things done, but SDEA President Mary McCorkle, who will also be new to South Dakota's legislative process believes this is an opportunity to move the education agenda forward.

"We have a lot of challenges ahead of us as a state when it comes to public education. If we are going to address the teacher shortage or our funding challenges, we have to build relationships with our legislators. We have to get to know each other, talk about our differences and look for places we can find common ground," said McCorkle. "I am new to this process and I know I have

a lot to learn, but my goal is to move the Association forward and work with our lawmakers to pass legislation that is good for students."

Educators got their first glimpse of what might be in store with the Governor's Budget Address in the beginning of December. In what has been described as a "vanilla" budget by some, Governor Daugaard is proposing a two-percent increase in general funds for K-12 education. This is half a percent more than inflation, but a long way from where school funding needs to be.

"SDEA appreciates Governor Daugaard's two percent proposal for education, but South Dakota has some big issues facing public education including the teacher shortage. While the governor's

budget proposal is a good place to start, it falls short of the funding schools will need to address the teacher shortage in South Dakota," said McCorkle. SDEA and others had hoped for more of an increase for K-12 funding. The total increase for public education across the board was a little over \$15.4 million, which is a slightly over a third of the \$49.4 million in new spending Daugaard outlined in his budget.

FY2016 Recommended Ongoing Expense - Education

Major Increases/Decreases	General Funds
State Aid to General Education	\$8,962,141
State Aid to Special Education	\$2,666,902
BOR Maintenance and Repair	\$2,055,512
Grow SD Opportunity Scholarships	\$1,274,001
BOR Utility Costs	\$1,230,803
Dual Credit Increased Demand	\$802,500
Technical Institute Facilities	\$437,533
Miscellaneous Increases/Decreases	(\$2,003,906)
TOTAL GENERAL FUND INCREASES	\$15,425,486

FY2016 Recommended Ongoing Expense - Summary

Major Increases/Decreases	General Funds
Education Increases	\$15,425,486
Medical & Provider Assistance Increases	\$16,228,696
State Employee Compensation Package	\$11,134,753
All the Rest	\$6,617,539
TOTAL GENERAL FUND INCREASES	\$49,406,474



Find SDEA's President on Twitter @Mary_McCorkle

Filling a New (or Veteran!) Teacher's Stocking

From Leslie Sunderland, a teacher mentor at Havre de Grace Middle - High Schools in Havre de Grace, Maryland

I can't claim to be the originator of all of these ideas for stocking stuffers. Many of them I've collected from others through the years, while a few have been born of my own experiences.

1. Facial tissues that contain lotion — great for cleaning most chalkboards and won't leave any residue.
2. Shaving cream — cleans desks while students may "finger-paint" in it to complete math problems or other practice items.
3. Small spray bottle — stores water necessary for clearing water soluble ink on overhead projectors.
4. Pieces of green plastic 2-liter soda bottles — when cut into shapes, these make great highlighters and pointers for overhead projectors.
5. Hairspray — for the obvious as well as for removing ink from clothing.
6. Safety pins and bandages — may cut down on students' trips to the nurse.
7. Hard candy — the Lifesaver metaphor is always a hit.



SDEA President's Message

By the time you receive this edition of the Advocate, Christmas will be past. I hope you are taking time to enjoy family and friends and taking time for yourself to recharge and relax. I am spending the holidays with my daughter and my son and his family. My granddaughter's first Christmas was a joy for our whole family, including my loud and laughing brother and sister and their families.

Already the holiday break is speeding by, and New Year's will find us making resolutions and preparing for second semester. Here at SDEA we will return from Christmas break and begin to prepare for the 2015 legislative session.

This will be my first legislative session as SDEA President. My initial focus must be building relationships with our legislators, those who have a long time track record as friends of education, those who are new to the legislature, and those whose views are different from ours. We know that relationships with our students and their families are critical to our students' success. Relationships with legislators are critical to education funding and

addressing the issue of teacher shortage long term, as well as the other educational issues we care deeply about.

As a part of building relationships with our legislators, I must look for the things that we have in common as a place to begin, and we must have the conversations that are difficult...the conversations about the issues and concerns which are ours, and the issues and concerns which are theirs. The more conversations, the more understanding; I believe this. It is the only way to move forward.

Over the past few months there has been much conversation around funding challenges and the teacher shortage. These two important topics create an opportunity for me to forge new relationships and gain new allies. We must work together if we are going to solve these problems. Laying the work that needs to be done at the feet of the Governor, or at the feet of the legislature, or at the feet of our school districts leaves all of us watching and reacting without being a part of any possible solutions. Building relationships, working together, focusing on our



students—this is the path we will take during this legislative session.

On New Year's, we reflect on the past year and set goals to move ahead; opportunity is everywhere. Our SDEA lobbyists will be ready to go, looking for opportunities as the session opens.

May each of you continue to have a joyous holiday season. Thank you for what you do for every student in South Dakota every day. You are greatly appreciated.

Mary J. McCorkle

Mary J. McCorkle, SDEA President



Mitchell Education Association Takes Lead on SLO Training for Teachers

After Ralyna Schilling, Amanda Chada and Carli Ellwein attended the SDEA's Student Learning Objectives (SLO) Boot Camp Last summer, they knew they needed they needed to take what they learned and share it with the other teachers in the Mitchell School District. As teachers across the state were looking for guidance and support with the new concept of SLO's, the Mitchell Education Association (MEA) decided to take the lead to provide valuable training to their colleagues throughout the year.



The local set up a training schedule to coincide with the SLO timeline. This allowed the teachers to work together as they learned the process. The first class, SLO 1, was the modeled after the classes offered by SDEA and South Dakota Department of Education this past summer. Nineteen teachers attended that course. The second round of training, SLO 2, covered steps one through three of the SLO process and 20 teachers participated in those sessions.

Teachers in the district see this members-led professional development as a real opportunity for collaboration. "Those attending the class have

appreciated the opportunity to work collaboratively through the process. They have found having work time, question answer time, and peer editing time beneficial," said Chada. "This has been a learning process for all of us. There has been power in coming together from different buildings, to find common ground, discover inconsistencies, and strive for continuity across the district."

Teachers in the district can take the classes for graduate or continuing education credits.

However, members receive one graduate credit per class at a cost of \$45 per class while non-members pay \$90 per credit. MEA covered the cost of members for continuing education credits and non-members pay \$45 for each class. Graduate credits were offered through Dakota Wesleyan University.

The reduced cost is something the local members really appreciate. "This has been well received. I think those participating in the class have positive things to say about the support that SDEA has provided all teachers," said Chada. "Additionally, members are able to talk about the extra monetary support given to them

for their efforts in pioneering the SLO process in our district." Administrators have supported MEA's efforts; especially since the district did not plan on providing any additional training on SLO's. "Several administrators attended our overview, which we presented at our pre-service. One administrator attended our SLO 1 class, said Chada. "During pre-service, administration did share with the teachers that they wouldn't be doing any further training on SLOs. They encouraged those wanting more guidance to take our classes. Principals even attended our fall class, meeting with their staff to work through the approval process."

Teachers in Mitchell can still participate in the third and final installment of the training which will speak to the best practices of SLO evaluation. Those classes will be offered January through May 2015. If you are interested in providing SLO training in your local, contact your local Uniserv Director or SDEA's Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Rich Mittelstedt at Richard.Mittelstedt@sdea.org. Members may receive a stipend for taking SDEA approved SLO training. Graduate or CEUs may also be available.



SDEA Announces the Gordon Horgen Memorial Scholarship

The South Dakota Education Association/NEA is calling for applications for the new Gordon Horgen Memorial Scholarship, which will be 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.

Throughout his 41 years as a science teacher, Gordon Horgen was an advocate for all students. He wanted to help them succeed at their highest potential and capability. To better understand the Native American Culture, he attended multiple workshops on the USD campus in Vermillion and attended another two-day workshop with Native American instructors and guest speakers in Mission, SD. Additionally, Gordon was always open for dialog with parents and community leaders. Gordon used these experiences to incorporate

more hands-on examples and experiments into his science courses and related various complex scientific theories to things more readily observed in nature. Gordon's advocacy was also evident in his teaching Sinte Gleska College Classes at night for over ten years in the late 1980's and early 1990's in his classroom at Winner High School.

Recipients may be award up to two \$750 scholarships for each academic year. The scholarships are open to Native American high school seniors or college sophomores who are planning on going into the teaching profession. To learn more about this and other SDEA scholarships, visit www.sdea.org. Applications must be submitted to SDEA no later than Friday, March 6, 2016.



Winter Holiday Rotation

An Anonymous Works4Me Reader

Our team of five first-grade teachers agrees to a winter holiday rotation every year.

Each teacher prepares a lesson to cover one winter holiday, and the kids rotate through the classes all day long. We can fit in four rotations of about 35-40 minutes a lesson. We cover our own class with our lesson on a separate day.

Students think this is a very special day, because they are visiting different teachers' classrooms. Each teacher can focus on one holiday and give it the attention it deserves instead of trying to cover a lot of different holidays in addition to the regular curriculum.

We typically cover Hanukkah, Christmas around the World, Kwanzaa, Chinese New Year, and Diwali.

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Irregular Plural Nouns with a Bit of Holiday Spirit!

Barbara Hyler and Patti Barns, a learning disabilities specialist and a fourth grade teacher at Bettie Weaver Elementary School in Midlothian, Virginia

This song was created to teach a fourth-grade collaborative language arts class. We enhance our appearance with anything we can find in the music teacher's storage closet. Top hats and sequin bow ties are among our favorite costumes. The song and costumes all make for a memorable lesson and provide the added benefit of a multi-sensory approach needed for the L.D. children:

The Twelve Days of Christmas

On the first day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
A very noisy song to sing.
On the second day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Two tapping feet,
And a very noisy song to sing.
On the third day of Christmas,
My true love gave to me
Three laughing children,
Two tapping feet,
And a very noisy song to sing.
Four hammering men...
Five stirring women...
Six geese a-honking...
Seven mice a-squeaking...
Eight reindeer playing...
Nine teeth a-chattering...
Ten fish a-bubbling...
Eleven sheep a-baaing...
Twelve moose a-calling...

SDEA/NEA 2015 Elections

January 15, 2015, is the last day to notify Mary McCorkle, SDEA/NEA President of your declaration to run for an SDEA Board of Director position, or as a state-funded delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly.

There are 10 seats open for the 2015 SDEA Officers/Board of Directors election:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Black Hills (two 2-year terms; one 1-year term)
- Plains (one 2-year term)
- James River Valley (one 2-year term)
- SECOR (one 2-year term)
- EGL (one 2-year term)
- SEKota (one 2-year term; one 1-year term)
- COHE At-Large (one 2-year term)

Note: Please include a 50-word

statement of why you are running for any of the above positions. In addition to a statement, please submit a photo for Board positions.

NEA RA DELEGATES

- Black Hills (two delegates)
- Plains (one delegate)
- James River Valley (one delegate)
- Secor (one delegate)
- EGL (one delegate)
- SEKota (two delegates)
- At-Large (five delegates)

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

Members who wish to serve as a delegate to the 2015 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 1-6, 2015 in Orlando, FL.



Any member may submit recommended changes to the SDEA/Bylaws and Guiding Principles. Recommended changes must be submitted in writing to the SDEA President no later than January 15, 2015.

You may also contact the SDEA BOD Election Staff Liaison, Anne Plooster at anne.plooster@sdea.org or SDEA President, Mary McCorkle at mary.mccorkle@sdea.org.

Mail the completed form to:
SDEA President
Attn: Elections
411 East Capitol Ave
Pierre, South Dakota 57501

All necessary election forms may be found online at www.sdea.org.





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Groundhog/Shadow Day

Michele Slusher, a kindergarten teacher at Woodbine Christian Academy in Nashville, Tennessee

Turn Groundhog Day into Shadow Day: a day during which the parents take their children (and maybe a few friends) to work and let them be their shadow. The children get to experience a day at work and see first hand how their schoolwork applies to the real world. We are making it a school wide event, hoping all will be able to participate.

SDEA Announces Grant and Scholarship Opportunities - Applications due soon!

Ramia Boersma Memorial 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.

The deadline for paperwork to arrive at the SDEA office is February 15, 2015.

Visit www.sdea.org for the details and the nomination form.

educational and student-oriented projects. The foundation program funds new member-led projects. The SDEA/NEA Educational Foundation gives preference to proposals that address student achievement, cultural diversity issues, include community partnerships, and can be duplicated by others.



The application deadline to the SDEA office is May 1, 2015. Go to www.sdea.org for the guidelines and application.

SDEA/NEA Innovation Grants

The SDEA/NEA Educational Foundation Program provides grants up to \$1,000.00 (one thousand dollars) to members of the association in support of innovative



Fairness in Action

How do we teach students to treat others with fairness - playing by the rules, taking turns and sharing, being open-minded, listening to others, not taking advantage of others, and not blaming others? Here's how two educators put this behavior into action.

When Students Say "I Hate This"

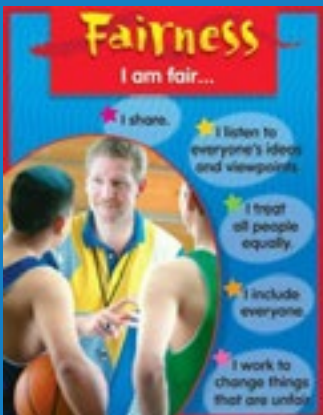
My favorite reply to the "I hate this" remark (or any other inane complaint) is "Bummer." Add a knowing, commiserative nod. You appear sympathetic to the poor child's "discomfort," yet you invite no more comment. Kids have no response for this.

~csanders, high school teacher

Be Open-Minded

Don't hold an incident against a child for the remainder of the year.

~Lois Yukna, bus driver, Woodbridge, New Jersey



Yankton Education Association celebrates!

Congratulations to the Yankton Education Association on being named the Volunteers for the Month of November by the Yankton Area United Way. The Locals collected donations that far exceeded expectations. Way to go YEA! Members from the Yankton Education Association and the Yankton Area United Way (below) and YEA President Carol Larrington accepting the award from the Yankton Area United Way.



By Rosalie
Aslesen, VP



SDEA *Retired*

Luck was with us this time when we planned a SDEA-R event in October. Using a new training grant from NEA-R, SDEA-R held a leadership workshop for members in the West River region a week after the one in Sioux Falls. We met at the SDEA office in Rapid City on October 20, 2014. The conference room met our needs perfectly. Those attending were SDEA president, Mary McCorkle, Laura Haug, SDEA Retired Program Coordinator, who led the discussion, and John Salladay, SDEA-R president. Also in attendance were Rosalie Aslesen, SDEA-R vice-president, Jacqueline Sly, Sharron Darrow, Lois Townsend and Terri Schroeder, all from Rapid, plus Bob Schuh and his wife from McIntosh. Sharron Darrow won the drawing which was a gift bag full of various items, totaling \$50. President Mary also offered a prize which was won by Bob's wife. Lunch was paid for by the grant. Another nice incentive to those attending who drove 50 miles or more was a \$50 stipend. The first topic of discussion was MEMBER INVOLVEMENT. Under that heading we discussed Current Reality: Where would we like to be? How do we get there? What can we realistically do? We agreed that the newly retired are not joining and one of the reasons is they are not aware of the retired organization and what it has to offer. Another problem is that we are a state-wide local and it is difficult to get together. Many retired teachers do not want to be busy, that part of their life is over. Many move. Where would we like to be? The main goal would be to work on getting retired or soon to retire members to join. Other

suggestions were to have clear activities with a purpose, to get more member involvement and to provide retired specific materials. How do we get there? We need to have better communication via several methods. Having our news in the SDEA Advocate has been very helpful in letting members know that there is a Retired organization. Contact information needs to be in every Advocate. We also need to continue communicating with email and snail mail for those who do not have email. A problem with email is that retired folks do not contact SDEA when they change email addresses. Of equal importance, members need to know who to contact to change their addresses. The Retired link on the SDEA website needs to be updated with a different font and color. The link to the Retired should be easier to find with contact information posted prominently. The dues structure should also be included. Word of mouth is still a very valuable way of inviting members to join the Retired organization. As an organization we need to focus on one or two things that can be accomplished each year. What can we realistically do? Word of mouth is an excellent way to get members to join Retired. We need better communication for all. Other suggestions were that some fun is needed and members need to be recognized and thanked. Ask members if they would like to do just one little thing. We need to continue having the Fall socials. Those attending in Rapid emphasized that if they are asked to help with something, and they agree, then they need to be given a job to do. The next topic was GRANTS. Our two new grants, received this

fall, total \$4,800. Our October Leadership Training sessions were paid for by one grant and the Spring event will be paid for by the other one. That gathering will focus on the soon to be retired teachers. Suggestions for other grants were, to take a survey to ask members what they want and for ideas for other projects to involve members. COMMUNICATIONS. Refer to the above discussion under How do we get there? Also suggested was to check addresses with SDEA and to make sure SDEA is given the names and contact information of all new members. The personal letters from the president should be continued. Invite someone to go with you whenever you plan to attend a Retired event. What needs to be communicated? Events, positives, what SDEA-R does for you, membership and state facts were all suggested. When someone has won a drawing let all members know. Drawings are incentives to attend events. Helpful hints on the website for newly retired could be done. Also on the website, the unapproved minutes from the annual meeting, budget and financial reports, and bylaws. Also suggested were targeting appropriate people, ask for help and offer help. What can we realistically do? We can and will continue the page in the Advocate and in every issue list the SDEA-R and NEA-R link as well as the dues structure. A report by the NEA Director would be interesting in the Advocate. SDEA-R will publish its own newsletter prior to the Annual meeting because the Advocate is very large before the SDEA-RA. Sandwiches were ordered from Murphy's Pub across the street and we took a lunch break. A discussion about the SDEA-R Annual Meeting followed. What have recent meetings involved? Last year's business meeting was confrontational. Most meetings have been

informational followed by a program often of speakers from SDRS and SDEA. Last year the candidates spoke. Dinner was available for those who stayed for the SDEA-RA. A \$50 stipend has been offered to those who stay for the SDEA-RA as delegates. What we would like to see at future meetings. The business meeting needs to be concise, with an agenda. A treasurer's report and minutes need to be printed for all. Information needs to be sent out early about deadlines to attend the Annual meeting, to announce your candidacy for an office, to be a delegate for the SDEA-RA, and where to send that information. New business items need to be in writing. Proper protocol needs to be followed. BYLAWS REVISIONS. A committee was named after the last annual meeting to work on revising the bylaws. The proposed revisions will be sent to those members who commit to attend the annual meeting in 2015. Mailing them to all members is too expensive. The approved bylaws will be posted on the SDEA-R link on the SDEA website after the annual meeting. NEA DIRECTOR. SDEA-R member Bob Hoffman was elected to the NEA Board of Directors. It was suggested Bob write an article for the Advocate about his role as NEA Director and update the members in each issue of the Advocate. All those attending this event felt it was worthwhile as input was gathered from several sources. This information will help guide the Executive Committee. Overall, this was a productive and successful event.

Who To Contact

For questions, please contact:

Laura Haug

Retired Program Coordinator

411 E. Capitol • Pierre, SD 57501
800-529-0090 ext. 126
605-224-9263 ext. 126
laura.haug@sdea.org

It's Award Time!

SDEA earned a first place award for its SLO Boot Camp at the 2014 Nat'l. Staff Association for the Improvement of Instruction Conference! Congratulations to all who contributed to the success of our SLO work—the developers, trainers, participants, staff—all were integral to the process!



South Dakota to Benefit from Increased E-Rate Funding

The Federal Communications Commission voted to substantially increase investment in high-speed broadband connectivity to the Internet for schools and public libraries by increasing E-rate program funding by \$1.5 billion. In a historic 3-2 vote, the Commission's action is as significant as it is bold – as the program's funding has been capped since it was created. This is a big win for students in our classrooms that would not have been possible without NEA members having raised their voices, including at the Representative Assembly this year, with Congress and the FCC – resulting in a historic and significant investment in 21st century teaching and learning.

For South Dakota, it means that more schools and libraries will be able access more dollars to help them access faster speeds and more broadband capacity. Last year alone, 55 projects in South Dakota's schools and libraries were left unfunded. The increased investment by the FCC will help ensure those projects are completed sooner rather than later.

"The Federal Communications Commission announcement



is good for America's students and makes for smart public policy. Increasing the funding level of the E-Rate Program will continue to bring broadband to the communities that need it the most—students and educators in urban, rural, and low-density populated areas. More to the point, investing now in the E-Rate Program to help students will pay off in the long run," said Lily Eskelsen García. "Educators know firsthand the tremendous, positive impact the E-Rate Program has had in our classrooms, schools and communities. Without the E-Rate Program, many of our schools—especially in rural areas—would have been unable to sustain on-going access to the Internet. This announcement will go a long way to help level the digital playing field for our country's students and ensuring equity."

Additional measures to close the rural broadband gap:



In addition to this historic funding increase, the Commission also voted to adopt several measures to help close the rural broadband gap. The Commission has also adopted several incentives for broadband build-out in rural areas with high up-front costs. While existing

E-rate rules cover the costs of special construction charges to pay for new infrastructure, additional incentives have been incorporated so that schools will receive bids to build in areas where there are currently no high-speed options. Also, states will now have the option to contribute matching funds of up to 10 percent, further incentivizing build-out. In addition, another measure adopted calls for the USF Connect America Fund (CAF) program to require those service providers benefiting from CAF subsidies to also build-out to rural and remote area community anchor institutions, including under served schools.

These measures, along with significant investment in the E-rate, position the program to help schools meet 21st century broadband capacity needs. This is a big win for the students in our classrooms – especially those in our most rural schools and with the greatest need. This vote by the FCC invests in the E-rate program to help ensure it can provide sustainable, on-going access to high-capacity broadband for all our schools, no matter their locale, at reasonable prices.



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ED Camp coming this spring!

Profile on the Commission on Teaching and Learning Member

Name:
Lou Ann Jensen
School District:
Estelline School
District
Subject Taught:
English/US History

Why did you choose to be on the Commission on Teaching and Learning?

In the aftermath of all the budget cuts and HB 1234, I was excited to see so many groups including the Department of Education, school administrators, school boards and SDEA come together to work on improving education for South Dakota's children. SDEA worked hard to fight against HB 1234. It is easy to disagree with something, but it is also important to do the hard work and come up with alternative solutions. I felt that the Commission on Teaching and Learning would be an opportunity to do that.

What is the most important work the Commission has done to this point?

The Teacher Evaluation System has been the most important work the Commission has done. Although it is complex, when fully implemented I feel this system will provide teachers and administrators an opportunity to work together to improve each individual teacher's performance in the classroom. This summer the Department of Education worked with classroom teachers to train 5,800 of teachers in the SLO process. This is an important first step in giving teachers some ownership of their own evaluation. We all know that a single metric can't measure how effective a teacher is, but it's a good first step to demonstrate that we do have an impact on students learning.



What do you hope to accomplish as a member of the Commission on Teaching and Learning?

I feel that over the years SDEA has worked hard to ensure that all students in South Dakota receive a quality education and I feel it's my responsibility to work to ensure those same opportunities are available for the next generation. I also think it's important to give something back to the profession of teaching. South Dakota is facing a severe teacher shortage. We need to encourage dedicated individuals to become teachers. I think being part of the SDCTL this is one way to strengthen teaching and education in South Dakota.

Acts of Kindness

Majii, a third grade teacher

I have a board set up in my room where students can write the good deeds of others. My students are grouped in teams at the beginning of the year.

When the members of the team agree that one of the other members did something extra special or nice, the team signs the person up on my Acts of Kindness board on index cards that hang on the board. They list the person's name, the date, and what the person did that was extra nice.

At the end of the week the name cards are placed in a bucket and one to two names are picked out. The students who are picked get a prize and the names are cleared for the next week.

Trust me... acts of kindness will soar!



After Holiday Sales

Cathlina Bergman, an English teacher at Oskaloosa High School in Oskaloosa, Kansas

I find a lot of use for items I buy during all those after-holiday sales. I use Christmas bows to divide students into teams or cooperative learning groups. As students enter the room, they choose a bow out of the box and attach it to their shirts. When it's time to work together, they create groups by color or size of bow or solids vs. stripes.

For class celebrations, my students love silly prizes like paper horns, bubbles or confetti from leftover New Year's Eve party favors. (They don't care if the year is right or not!)

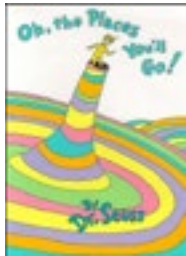
In late January or February, I buy discounted calendars for my classroom. I look for book-themed calendars (Chronicles of Narnia, Harry Potter, Lemony Snicket) or just ones I think my students would enjoy. I get double value out of these items: after the year is over, I cut apart the months, laminate them, and use them for displays in years to come. A recycled Dr. Seuss calendar made a great "Name That Book" display and contest last March.



Save The Date Read Across America 2015

Mark Your Calendars! Read Across America Day is March 2, 2015

Oh, the Places You'll Go when you read!. March 2, 2015, is NEA's Read Across America Day and this year, the book is the Seuss classic, *Oh, The Places You'll Go*. Start your planning and get ready to read this spring as NEA prepares a Seussational Read Across America celebration. Save the Date!



Grab Your Hat and Read with the Cat! Celebrate NEA's Read Across America Day

Those who are six, sixteen, sixty-four, and more have all kinds of great events in store for the National Education Association's nineteenth annual observance of NEA's Read Across America. NEA is calling America's children, both young and old, to reward their learning by celebrating the joys of reading on Dr. Seuss's birthday. Readers of all ages are encouraged to celebrate with this year's book *Oh, the Places You'll Go!*

Read Across America Day will take place on March 2, 2015.

For more information about how to generate excitement for reading among America's children and their families and about best practices

for motivating and teaching reading, visit www.nea.org/readacross.



SDEA Legislative Meet and Greet

SDEA members talk with local legislators in Sioux Falls and Rapid City on the upcoming session and the challenges facing educators.



Teacher Pay Tax Plan Faces Up-Hill Battle

Perhaps the hottest topic of the upcoming legislative session is whether or not legislators will work to address South Dakota's teacher shortage. According to a survey by the School Administrators of South Dakota, 31 school districts began the 2014-2015 school year with open positions and many districts reported the number of applicants for open positions was significantly down from past years.

There is a proposal to create a Teacher Salary Enhancement Fund which would be funded with an additional penny sales tax during the months of June, July and August. It is estimated that the additional tax would generate \$40 million dollars to boost salaries. In order to access this fund, school districts would have to maintain a base salary between \$32,000 and \$34,000 or show that they are making progress in bringing base salaries to that level. Districts must also have a fund balance below 40 percent or show that they are making adequate progress to bring the fund balance to 40 percent or lower.

The proposal also allows school districts to offer bonuses, loan repayments, moving expenses

or market based compensation. Districts would also be prohibited from negotiating these incentives with local bargaining units. Districts may also have the ability to match any offer made to a current teacher by another in state or out of state district. Again, the local bargaining unit would be prohibited from negotiating the terms of these transactions. Most political observers believe the proposal faces an uphill battle with the Republican dominated legislature that has historically resisted any tax increases.

President McCorkle doesn't disagree that passing a tax increase this year is probably not likely, but she believes that if educators, community members, lawmakers and the governor work together, they can come up with a long-term solution to deal with the teacher shortage. She also stresses that while salaries must be addressed, the long term solutions must address everything to ensure the state has high quality teacher preparation programs,

sound mentoring programs for new teachers and meaningful professional support for career teachers.

"SDEA is in 110 percent support of efforts to increase teacher salaries across the state. We must do that to attract the best and brightest to the profession. But we also need to keep them and that is why we believe the plan has to be comprehensive and not a short-term fix," said McCorkle. "I am really looking forward to the start of the legislative session. I am excited to meet all of the legislators, to talk to them about the issues that concern us, and to get to work on the issues that matter to students, because in the end it really is about our students."

The 2015 Legislative Session opens with Governor Dugaard's State of the State address on Tuesday, January 13 and concludes its main run on Friday March 14th.

To follow the latest developments from Pierre sign-up for Lobby Line at www.sdea.org/lobbyline.

Session Time is Coming

Follow Lobby Line for the latest news and happenings from the capitol.

Not Registered?
Sign up at our Legislative Action Center at www.sdea.org/lobbyline

Join the conversation on Facebook facebook.com/sdea.org And follow @SDEAEducators on Twitter!

Four Easy Ways to Reduce Stress

By Karen Zauber, NEA

In looking for some ways to help keep everybody calm, I found four ideas that appealed to me:

Assist Somebody Every Day
This idea reminded me of my favorite commercial. My examples won't be exact, but you'll get the picture:

A man picks up the book a woman has dropped. She pulls another man out of the path of a van that's backing up. He opens the door for a young man carrying boxes. A kind of pay-it-forward "tag": I helped you. You're IT. Pass it on. Helping someone else is a good way to take your mind off you, a natural de-stressor.

Make Time to Relax

Shut off the cell phone, iPod, computer, television, and radio and enjoy the quiet for awhile. You might read a book, paint, or do other quiet activities. Or talk with friends and family. Taking time to be quiet or to be with people we care about can be therapeutic.

Have a Good Laugh

A good laugh can be a great stress reliever. It releases endorphins and other healthy hormones and takes your mind off of whatever's worrying you. A big belly laugh can even provide a bit of a physical workout. Plus laughing with kids is fun to do.

Listen to music

Music with a slower tempo promotes a calm, meditative state. Try classical and other instrumental music. Encourage the kids around you to relax and, if necessary, teach them how. Busy times provide opportunities for you to talk about and demonstrate these simple ideas. And here's a bonus: All these strategies do more than relax you. They also put you in a positive frame of mind. Just what we need to get through the stressful times.





411 East Capitol Ave.
Pierre, SD 57501
605-224-9263 ph
605-224-5810 fax
www.sdea.org

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Upcoming Events

December 2014

Dec 25 Christmas Day - offices closed
Dec 26 Kwanzaa
Dec 26-31 Holiday Break - offices closed

January 2015

Jan 1 New Year's Day - offices closed
Jan 2 Holiday Break - office closed
Jan 5 Offices reopen
Jan 13 SEKota Meeting - TBA
Jan 13 SECOR Meeting - Yankton
Jan 13 Legislative Session begins
Jan 15 Last day to declare SDEA candidacy/changes to SDEA bylaws
Jan 19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day - offices closed
Jan 26 Black Hills Meeting - Rapid City



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