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## Bold Expectations for the Blue Ribbon Task Force Recommendations

During his annual Budget Address at the beginning of December, Governor Dennis Daugaard stated that “the public expects us to be bold.” This was in reference to the recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF). While the Governor told lawmakers that they would have to wait until January to learn more about the proposal he will bring forward, he did acknowledge that South Dakota must pay its teachers more in order to keep salaries competitive regionally. The Governor did not go into detail but acknowledged that the Task Force delivered a thorough report that “should not be put up on a shelf.”

Force’s recommendation will be in addition to what is in his current budget proposal.

Lawmakers expect the Governor to bring a package that includes most if not all of the recommendations including a minimum increase of \$75

million in new and ongoing money for K-12 education. The goal of the new dollars is to raise the state wide average teacher salary from \$40,000 to \$48,000, which would be on par with South Dakota’s neighboring states. How that will be paid for and how



the money is going to be distributed will be debated during the 2016 Legislative Session.

SDEA President Mary McCorkle stresses that the opportunity to see a significant increase

in education funding may not come again in the foreseeable future and that



it’s an opportunity we cannot squander. “We may not get this chance again. We have to make this happen,” said McCorkle. “We cannot sit on the sidelines and hope the Legislature makes this happen. Educators need to be a part of the process of making the recommendations a reality for our schools, and more importantly, for our students.

McCorkle is encouraging members to become involved in the “Be Bold” campaign, which encourages educators from across the state to contact their local legislators to encourage support for legislation that meets the goals of the Blue Ribbon Task Force. “Be bold is a phrase we heard several times as the

Task Force did its work. We heard it from the public at the listening sessions

in June; we heard it from the members of the Task Force; we heard it from the Co-Chairs

*“Now is the time to be bold and to find additional ongoing dollars to assure the success of South Dakota’s greatest asset: our kids.” Senator Deb Soholt*



Make sure you mark your calendars for these upcoming important dates:

January 12 - SD 2016 Legislative session begins

January 15 - Last day to declare candidacy/bylaw changes to SDEA President

Find SDEA’s

President on Twitter

@Mary\_McCorkle



## Ramia Boersma and Gordon Horgen Scholarship applications due

The South Dakota Education Association/NEA is calling for applications for the Ramia Boersma Scholarship. 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, 2016. Visit [www.sdea.org](http://www.sdea.org) for the details and the nomination form.

The South Dakota Education Association/NEA is calling for applications for the Gordon Horgen Memorial Scholarship, which will be awarded to Native American students who are planning on entering the teaching profession.

Recipients may be awarded 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](http://www.sdea.org). Applications must be submitted to SDEA no later than Friday, March 6, 2016.



## 2016 SDEA Elections

January 15, 2016 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 Directors position, or as a state-funded delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly.

There are 3 seats open for the 2015 SDEA Officers/Board of Directors election:

### OFFICERS

- SDEA Treasurer

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- ESP At-Large (one 2-year term)
- Minority At-Large (one 2-year term)

**Note: Treasurer candidates should include a 150-word statement why you are running for a SDEA officer position, and a 50-word statement for At-Large Board of Directors positions. In addition to a statement, please submit a photo.**

### NEA RA DELEGATES

- Black Hills (two delegates)
- Plains (one delegate)
- James River Valley (one delegate)
- SECOR (one delegate)
- EGL (one delegate)
- SEKota (two delegates)
- Minority At-Large (one delegate)
- At-Large (four delegates)

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

Members who wish to serve as a delegate to the 2016 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 2-7, 2016 in Washington, DC.

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, 2016.

You may also contact the SDEA Board of Directors Election Staff Liaison, Anne Plooster at [anne.plooster@sdea.org](mailto:anne.plooster@sdea.org) or SDEA President, Mary McCorkle at [mary.mccorkle@sdea.org](mailto: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](http://www.sdea.org).

## President McCorkle Travels the State to Promote Public Education

During American Education Week, President Mary McCorkle hit the road for SDEA's Annual Media Tour, McCorkle visited a total of 12 media outlets throughout the state. She traveled from Sioux Falls, to Mitchell, to Aberdeen and to Rapid City.

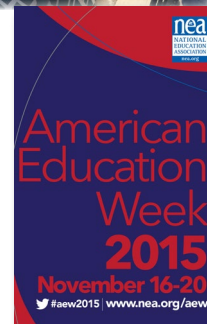
The focus of the tour was to encourage educators and the public in general to support the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Task Force. She emphasized the need for



wait. We may never have this opportunity again!

To see the coverage of President McCorkle's tour visit our Newsroom at [www.sdea.org](http://www.sdea.org).

educators to get involved in the upcoming legislative debate stating 'now is not the time for us to sit on the sidelines and





# President's Corner

## SDEA President's Message

In November, the Blue Ribbon Task Force released its recommendations including recommendations that the state set a goal to increase the statewide average teacher salary from \$40,000 to \$48,000, provide new and ongoing funding of at least \$75 million for general K-12 education funding, and create an ongoing revenue stream through a new penny sales tax to sustain the new funding. These are bold recommendations and now SDEA needs your help to turn them into reality.

"Bold"—showing an ability to take risks; confident and courageous

When Sen. Deb Soholt and Rep. Jacquie Sly convened the Blue Ribbon Task Force in July, they challenged task force members to "Be Bold"—to think big, to be courageous. At the last meeting of BRTF as Task Force members began to formulate the recommendations they would present to Gov. Dugaard, again they heard "Be Bold." In the December 8 Budget Address, when Gov. Dugaard, thanked the Task Force for its work and sound report; he indicated those recommendations would be addressed in the "State of the State" speech in January. He said, "I agree that South Dakota needs to increase teacher salaries. The public expects us to be bold."

It is now time for SDEA members to "Be Bold." It is time for us to be

confident and courageous and advocate for the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Task Force. I ask you to "Be Bold" and write a personal note to each legislator in your district; "Be Bold" and find a colleague or two to write a note as well. "Be Bold" and encourage legislators to support at least \$75 million in new and ongoing dollars to move South Dakota's average teacher salaries out of 51st place. Ask them to "Be Bold" and support the BRTF recommendations. "Be Bold" and stay in touch with the legislators in your district throughout the legislative session. If we do this work now and through the legislative session, we will build legislative relationships that will pay off long after the 2016 legislative session is over.

We have the opportunity between now and the end of the 2016 Legislative Session to help enact powerful positive legislation. It will not happen without you. Now is not the time to sit back and believe three registered SDEA lobbyists can make this happen alone. It is not the time to be on the sidelines and watch and wait to see what



happens. You must be bold and be involved. We need your voices to be a part of the discussion, to be a part of talking with legislators about the importance of being "bold" and passing the legislation to support the Blue Ribbon recommendations. "Be Bold", tell your story, be a part of positive change. We must "Be Bold"; we must work together; we will make it happen.

Always know that for everything you do for every student in every school in South Dakota and especially for the work you will do during the 2016 Legislative Session, you are very much appreciated.

Mary J. McCorkle  
SDEA President



**Be Bold for Schools, Be Bold for Teachers, Be Bold for KIDS**

## Help Your School Library and Reading Community

NEA's Books Across America is back with \$1,000 grants for school libraries in need, thanks to a generous donation by Walden Media and The Weinstein Company, producers of the film, "The Giver."

NEA members will be able to apply for one of 100 grants in the amount of \$1,000, made available by the NEA Foundation to fund the purchase of diverse books and reading materials for under resourced school libraries. Fill out the application found at <http://www.nea.org/grants/886.htm> and best of luck to you!

If you have any questions, email [readacross@nea.org](mailto:readacross@nea.org).

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## Be BOLD Frequently Asked Questions

### What are the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Task Force (Blue Ribbon Task Force)?

The major items the BRTF is asking the Governor to consider include creating a formula where funding is based on a student to teacher ratio with a targeted average teacher salary of \$48,000, adding at least \$75 million "new" and ongoing dollars to the general education funding stream, generating additional revenue through an additional sales and use tax, and reestablishing fund balance caps with an oversight board. The BRTF also recommends that the state provide \$1 million annually for mentoring programs and restore the funding for National Board Certified teachers. Other recommendations include creating a New Teacher Academy and granting reciprocity for teachers certified in other states.

Where will the money come from?

The Task Force is recommending that lawmakers provide an additional \$75 million in new and ongoing revenues for general education spending. If the money cannot be found in the state's current revenue stream, then the lawmakers should consider increasing the state's sales tax. One penny would generate over \$200 million, and a half of a penny would generate approximately \$100 million.

### Isn't the task force just recommending one-time money?

It is clear in the Task Force's recommendation that additional money needed to increase teacher salaries must be new and ongoing. The recommendations clearly state that the \$75 million must be in addition to what school districts are already receiving in general education dollars.

### Will every teacher get an \$8,000 raise?

The Task Force's recommendation is that the average salary in South Dakota

increase from approximately \$40,000 to \$48,000. In order to move the statewide average up, it is necessary to increase salaries at the bottom levels, the top levels and everywhere in between. This does not mean that every teacher will be paid \$48,000 or that every teacher will receive an \$8,000 increase. Actual salary increases will vary from district to district. Salaries should increase across the board, but that will vary depending on the local contract and local negotiations in the coming years.

### Does this mean we will no longer negotiate salaries with local school districts?

Locals will continue to negotiate salaries and benefits with the local school board. The target average salary sets a goal. The actual salary policy will look different from district to district. However, if the recommendations are accepted, all districts should receive a significant increase in general fund dollars with the understanding that the majority of new dollars going to teacher salaries.

### How will the proposed funding formula work?

The new formula will be based on a student to teacher ratio that will also account for the cost to pay South Dakota teachers an average of \$48,000. While the Task Force did agree the formula should be based on a student to teacher ratio, the members could not come to consensus on what that ratio should be. While, Task Force members agreed that it should include a sliding scale that would replace the small school factor in the current formula, it will be up to Governor Dugaard and the Legislature to determine the ratios and a sliding scale.

### Does the proposed formula mean the state will determine the student to teacher ratio in every classroom?

The ratio in the formula is only intended

to be used to calculate funding. School districts will continue to make the decisions on class size at the local level.

### How do the recommendations impact pension funds?

To simplify the formula, the BRTF recommends that the current dollars collected through the pension levy be rolled into one levy with the general fund. This change will not impact members' retirement benefits. Members of the Task Force also reiterated that this change should not be considered a part of the new dollars needed to increase salaries.

### Why are these recommendations different?

Perhaps the greatest outcome from these recommendations is that there is finally acknowledgment that South Dakota has a teacher shortage and that our salaries are not at a level to be competitive with other states. The message was clear; it is no longer acceptable for South Dakota teacher salaries to be ranked 51st in the nation. Even Governor Dugaard stated in his budget address that South Dakota must 'raise teacher pay to be competitive regionally'.

### What can I do?

Last summer during a series of listening sessions, the public told the Task Force to 'be bold' and now the Task Force is asking the legislature to do the same. Now is the time. The public asked our state's leaders to be bold, but they need to hear from educators. SDEA needs you to be bold and join this important conversation that is happening now. Communicate with your legislators. Write a letter. Send an email. Invite them to your classrooms. We have to be bold for South Dakota schools. We have to be bold for South Dakota's teachers and most importantly, we have to be bold for our students.

# Be BOLD

Find the Be BOLD Tool-kit at [www.sdea.org](http://www.sdea.org)

Find your local Legislator  
Sign up for Lobby Line  
Sign the Be BOLD commitment



**Be Bold for Schools, Be Bold for Teachers, Be Bold for KIDS**



## Be BOLD Fact Sheet

The Blue Ribbon Task Force (BRTF) recommends that lawmakers:

- Raise South Dakota's average teacher salary from \$40,000 to \$48,000 to be competitive regionally.
- Create a formula based on a student to teacher ratio. However, the BRTF could not come to consensus on what that ratio should be. There was agreement that it should include a sliding scale that would replace the small school factor in the current formula, but the members could not agree on what that scale should look like.
- Add at least \$75 million new and ongoing dollars to the general education funding for teacher salaries. The new funds should supplement the current appropriations for schools. If the new funding is phased-in over a period of years, it should be in addition to the inflationary increases required under current law.
- Add an additional penny to the sales tax to generate the necessary dollars if the dollars are not available through the state's current funding streams.
- Reestablish a fund balance cap with an oversight board.
- Retain the current statutory minimum inflation factor of 3% or inflation, whichever is less, in the new formula.
- Reevaluate teacher salaries every three years to assure South Dakota remains competitive with surrounding states.
- Simplify the formula by rolling dollars collected through the pension levy into the general fund levy. This change will not impact members' retirement benefits. Members of the Task Force also reiterated that this change should not be considered a part of the new dollars needed to increase salaries.
- Maintain the Limited English Proficiency Adjustment.
- Maintain the sparsity factor.
- Grant full reciprocity to teachers who are certified to teach in another state.
- Appropriate \$1 million annually for mentoring programs, creating a New Teachers Academy, and restoring funding for National Board Certification.
- Double the E-Learning Center's course offerings, allocating funds for innovation in virtual education and customized learning and appropriating \$1 million in ongoing funds for learning innovation.
- Fully implement all recommendations in three years.
- Adopt mechanisms to monitor the implementation of the new formula.
- Develop benchmarks, in particular for average teacher salaries, to ensure goals are met.
- Encourage school district to voluntary share service, authorizing funds to expand shared state services, and creating incentives for sharing personnel.



## Attention Local Leaders and/or Negotiators:

SDEA is beginning the process of creating a database of negotiated agreements from around the state.

Before that database is created, we need your input, ideas and suggestions.

Look for an email sometime in January with a survey regarding the database. When you get the survey, please fill it out – your input, ideas and suggestions are very important to us!

## Tips for communicating with your local legislators

- Contact your legislators via the telephone or by a letter or card. It is more personal and it allows you to better tell the story of your school and in your own voice. Throw a letter writing party in your school.
- Identify yourself as a teacher (or ESP, etc.).
- Identify yourself as a constituent if you are one.
- Be respectful and approach the conversation positively.
- Negative interactions with legislators impact what happens in Pierre. Be careful what you say and how you say it.
- If you are sending an email to legislators, use a personal email address. **DO NOT USE YOUR K12 EMAIL!**
- Describe the challenges in your school. What are the local needs? Does your local school have unfilled positions? Did your school have to cut classes, increase class sizes, shuffle teachers and or ask teachers to take on more work? How is a teacher shortage impacting local students? Are they losing opportunities?
- Explain how the recommendations from the Blue Ribbon Task Force will help your school and students. Specifically ask them to support legislation that provides ongoing revenue to increase teacher salaries to a level that is competitive regionally.
- Focus on what the recommendations mean for your students.
- Thank your legislators for their service to the state.
- Offer to be a resource for them.
- Provide them with your contact information.



Now is not the time to debate the past. We must move forward together.





# With Passage of Every Student Succeeds Act, Life After NCLB Begins

On December 10, President Obama, with a stroke of a pen, made it official: the No Child Left Behind era is over. Obama signed into law the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), one day after it was passed by an overwhelmingly bipartisan vote in the U.S. Senate, which followed broad passage in the House the week before.

The Every Student Succeeds Act is the seventh reauthorization of the landmark Elementary and Secondary Education Act, first passed in 1965, and the first since 2002 when NCLB became law. This reauthorization has been years in the making and suffered through several false starts, but it picked up steam in 2015 as opposition to the rigid “test and punish” regimen imposed by NCLB intensified and several education groups, including the NEA, lobbied Congress to get the job done.

“Students can’t afford to live another year under No Child Left Behind,” NEA President Lily Eskelsen García said repeatedly this year. Major progress was made over the summer with the passage of two separate reauthorization bills – the Every Child Achieves Act in the Senate and the Student Success Act in the House. In November, leaders from both chambers met and hammered out the compromise final bill – the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Critical to this entire effort was the unprecedented mobilization and advocacy of public school educators across the country. Although it took too long for NCLB’s staggering failures to register with many lawmakers in Congress, educators and parents have known for more than a decade that scrapping NCLB and replacing it with a law that provides more opportunity for all students and more time to learn was an urgent national priority. Their hard work, says Eskelsen García, was worth it. “This is a deserved victory for public education because the Every Student Succeeds Act will ensure all students have equal opportunity to a high-quality public education regardless of ZIP code,” Eskelsen García said.

**Every Student Succeeds Act: The Basics**  
What ESSA sets out to do is strike the right balance between the respective roles of

the federal, state and local governments in formulating education policy. The consensus over the past few years was that NCLB was heavily tilted toward the federal side but for the wrong reason. The original ESEA’s emphasis on ensuring equity and opportunity was brushed aside while new rigid, punitive mandates dictated to states how students and schools should be evaluated. The Every Student Succeeds Act goes a long way in defanging NCLB’s grinding test and punish regime, lays a path for new flexible pillars of school accountability and reaffirms the original law’s vision that ZIP code shouldn’t determine the quality of a child’s education.

Throughout the reauthorization process, NEA’s focus has been threefold: decouple standardized testing from high-stakes decisions, create an “opportunity dashboard” to help close opportunity gaps in needy schools and elevate the voices of educators in the policymaking process. Based on these measures, ESSA has the potential to be a game-changer.

## Opportunity Gaps in Focus.

For the first time, state-designed accountability systems must include at least one indicator of school success or student support to determine where holes should be filled. These indicators might include lack of school counselors, or inadequate access to advanced coursework or a richer curriculum.

## Less High-Stakes Testing.

ESSA will still require annual tests in grades 3-8 and once in high school. However one of the linchpins of NCLB, the so-called Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) mandate, is history. For years, this provision dangled threats of punitive measures, including closure, over struggling schools if they didn’t meet narrow federally mandated test-based measures of accountability. ESSA provides funding for states to audit and

streamline assessment systems, eliminate redundant and inefficient assessments and improve them. The new law also creates a pilot program for state-designed assessment systems that are driven by teaching and learning, rather than accountability, that best inform instruction. And where states allow, ESSA maintains the right of parents to opt their children out of statewide academic assessments and allows states to limit the amount of time students spend taking annual tests.

## Greater Educator Voice.

Over the past decade, educators’ expertise has been muzzled by NCLB’s unreasonable and unworkable federal mandates. There was simply never any room for a second opinion. While ESSA preserves the historic federal role in protecting the most vulnerable students, it also recognizes that top-down doesn’t work for everything. The new law prohibits the federal government from mandating teacher evaluations or defining what an “effective” teacher is and calls for many decisions for local schools and states be determined by collaboration between educators, parents and other community members. “Educators will have a seat at the table when it comes to making decisions that affect their students and classrooms,” said Eskelsen García.

## What Happens Next

Even after the historic passage of ESSA, the work in many ways is just beginning. Because the new law does away with so many federal mandates on everything from assessment, accountability and evaluation, state legislatures will be playing a decisive role in determining how ESSA is implemented. It’s now up to the states to work with local stakeholders and districts to design, for example, new and better assessments and accountability systems and follow-through on identifying and filling opportunity gaps.



### How the Every Student Succeeds Act Reduces High-Stakes Testing

Although the new law will continue to require annual tests in grades 3-8 and once in high school, it takes several important steps to reduce testing and decouple high-stakes decisions from these assessments.

- ✓ Eliminates Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), the rigid test-based standard NCLB used to measure student proficiency
- ✓ Provides funding for states to audit and streamline assessment systems, eliminate unnecessary and duplicative assessments, and improve the use of assessments
- ✓ Allows districts to apply to use another nationally recognized assessment in high school instead of the state standardized tests
- ✓ Creates a pilot program for state-designed assessment systems that allow for local district assessments driven by teaching and learning, not accountability alone
- ✓ Allows states to set a cap limiting the time students spend taking tests
- ✓ Maintains the right of parents and guardians to opt their children out of statewide academic assessments where state and local policies allow them to do so



## SDEA Names Belle Fourche's Shelly Mikkelson the 2016 Teacher of Excellence

The South Dakota Education Association (SDEA) named Shelly Mikkelson the 2016 SDEA Teacher of Excellence. Mikkelson teaches 2nd grade at South Park Elementary in Belle Fourche. Educators selected for this award have demonstrated outstanding professional practice, association advocacy, community engagement and leadership in professional development.

"Shelly's work with her students, with her colleagues both in her district and statewide, and especially with teacher education candidates, show her leadership and her dedication to great teaching and great public schools across South Dakota," said SDEA President Mary McCorkle. "She exemplifies what it means to lead the profession and understands why that is so important for our students. Shelly's dedication to her profession and her students supports our goal, which is to ensure that every child has a great teacher and that every student receives a great public education."

Mikkelson was very surprised that she was recognized for the award. "I did not know until SDEA President Mary McCorkle and Executive Director Mark Mickelsen arrived at South Park Elementary. All students grades 1-4 filled the gymnasium for what we thought was a motivational speaker," said Mikkelson. "As Mary began speaking, I changed my thinking to the thought that our school had won an award, until they announced my name!"

Mikkelson has taught at Belle Fourche's South Park Elementary for the past 20 years. She spent the first few years teaching Special Education, Migrant, Title, and team

taught 4th grade before becoming a 2nd grade teacher 13 years ago. For Mikkelson, the most rewarding part of teaching is the everyday smiles and stories that come from the students in her classroom. Her goal is simple: to bring out the best in every student. "I believe in finding the positive in every student and using praise to encourage students to reach for the stars while engaged in learning they never thought imaginable, including challenging those who are ready to learn more."

Creating an environment of collaborative learning is how Mikkelson finds success in the classroom. Her students find confidence by learning from one another. "Our classroom is a community of learners where we all work together as a team to collaborate and learn together. Seeing their faces light up, light bulbs coming on, becoming independent thinkers, and their confidence levels bursting is the most rewarding experience of being a teacher," said Mikkelson. "It is especially rewarding when students come back years later to reminisce about memories of elementary school, and thank me for supporting them in making smart decisions and believing in themselves."

Her advice for new teachers is to find a good mentor and ask questions even if the questions seem silly. Mikkelson tells new teachers to pace themselves. "Remember everything does not have to be done your first year of teaching, take baby steps to achieving your goals. Write reflection notes to yourself in your lesson plans... what worked well or to never try that again." Mikkelson encourages new teachers to keep things in perspective and



have a balance in life. "Take time to laugh, admit your mistakes, and have fun with your students. It is important to balance your school life with your personal life to prevent burnout," said Mikkelson. "Take time to enjoy your family and friends. Although there will be days the first few years you feel like a fish swimming upstream, believe in yourself and do not give up."

The award means Mikkelson is the SDEA nominee for the NEA Foundation Awards for Teaching Excellence, which recognizes, rewards, and promotes excellence in teaching and advocacy for the association. The awards are jointly presented by the NEA Foundation and the NEA. As an NEA state affiliate nominee, Mikkelson will receive a trip to the NEA Foundation's 2017 Salute to Excellence in Education Gala in Washington, DC.

"I feel honored to receive this award, as there are many deserving teachers who are dedicated to doing what is best for our students in South Dakota," said Mikkelson. "I am extremely excited to have the opportunity to represent South Dakota at the NEA Foundation's 2017 Salute to Excellence in Education Gala in Washington, D.C. in February 2017."

Five awardees are selected for The Horace Mann Awards for Teaching Excellence and receive \$10,000. The NEA Member Benefits Award for Teaching Excellence recipient, selected from the five, receives \$25,000 in cash and a personalized commemorative gift.



## Innovation Grants are available

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 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 deadline is get your application in is May 1, 2016.

Applications for 2016 are due on May 1, 2016. To learn more about the SDEA Innovation Grants, visit [www.sdea.org/grants](http://www.sdea.org/grants).





# Read Across America 2016

Mark Your Calendars!  
Read Across America Day  
is March 2, 2016!

## 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 twentieth 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.

Read Across America Day will take place on March 2, 2016.

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](http://www.nea.org/readacross).



## ESP State Directors Meeting and Leadership Training

By Dana Hillius

On November 17, I attended the NEA ESP State Directors meeting in Washington D.C. There I joined with colleagues to discuss the latest trends, trainings, and issues from across the nation. We heard plenty of stories about the tough challenges that members face on a daily basis. We covered everything from student behavior, workplace bullying, and the need for living wages. There were also inspiring stories about the leadership of members to make positive impacts in their schools. Rank and file NEA ESP members have taken the opportunity to learn and acquire leadership skills to improve both working conditions and the learning environment for students. We've found that ESPs know

what they need to make a difference in their working conditions, they often time just need more resources on how to do it.

During this time I was reminded of the SDEA ESP survey last spring. It may be no coincident that the most commonly identified need for training from SDEA was in leadership. Some went further and added comments to be more specific. What we heard from you is that leadership development is needed within locals and for more effectively working with administrators and co-workers. I used this opportunity to get resources on what a leadership training actually looks like. Using



the input from you and from colleagues across the nation, the work to create a training begins. After some review and research, leadership training will be under development starting in January. Stay tuned for more information on its roll out. When you think about leadership training, what do you envision? What do you need? I would love to hear from you! Please contact me at [dana.hillius@sdea.org](mailto:dana.hillius@sdea.org) or 605-342-8068.

## Another Congressional Victory...Students most in need to get nearly \$2 billion more in 2016

The NEA-supported Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2016 or omnibus, passed by Congress this week, increases funding for key programs serving students and families most in need by nearly \$2 billion (\$500 million for Title I, \$415 million for IDEA, \$570 million for Head Start, \$326 million for Child Care and Development Block Grants, and more). In addition,

the bill restores funding for preschool development grants and Title II teacher quality grants used to provide professional development and reduce class sizes. The new Pell grant maximum is \$5,915 (an increase of \$140).

And, in a huge victory for educators, the bill also delays for two years (until 2020) the Affordable Care

Act's 40 percent tax on the cost of employer-sponsored healthcare coverage above certain amounts—generally, \$10,200 for individuals and \$27,500 for families. Passage of the omnibus bill with funding increases and the excise tax delay (and ultimately the tax wins mentioned below) was a result of year-long advocacy by SDEA/NEA members.

## Educator tax deduction made permanent, indexed to inflation

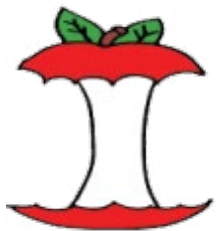
The annual \$250 educator tax deduction is now permanent, will be adjusted for inflation, and can be used for professional development as well as instructional materials and classroom supplies, thanks to the NEA-supported Protecting Americans from

Tax Hikes Act of 2015, also passed by Congress this week (and later combined with the omnibus). The same bill renewed the Qualified Zone Academy Bond (QZAB) program, which helps finance school renovations and repairs—recognition that

too many of today's students are housed in yesterday's buildings with out-of-date technology and often unsafe, crumbling infrastructures.







# SDEA Retired

By SDEA-Retired  
President, John  
Salladay

Happy New Year !

My word, where does time go --- it will be MMXVI (2016 – remember learning Roman Numerals ??) by the time this reaches you. Legislative session will be in full swing as well with all that entails here in Pierre.

I mentioned in the November-December Advocate we had applied for a workshop grant from NEA Retired to help fund pre-retired meetings. Though we requested \$3150, we were awarded \$2546.73. The tentative plan is to hold 2 informational meetings covering a few things you need to know before you retire. These will be held in the early spring; one in the west river area and one somewhere east river on a Saturday to accommodate working teachers. The format will be similar to the successful meetings we held last spring in March and April. Exact dates and times have not yet been decided however. These events would not be possible if we did not receive the NEA grant. In keeping with the ‘operate-in-the-black’ philosophy we are pleased to have funding from NEA.

Our fiscal year runs from September through September, remember. We have thus far received dues from approximately 76% of our members. Paid members, of course, keep their Insurance benefits and also the Liability benefits

which help protect if you choose to work ‘part-time’. You are also covered if you do volunteer work at schools (strange things can and do happen liability-wise if you ‘work’ and are not covered).

If you see active members who will soon retire, please encourage them to join and become pre-retired lifetime NEA & SDEA retired members. If they do so, until they retire they owe nothing more for retired membership until they actually retire. Once actually retired, they would only pay the annual local dues currently set at \$10.

To those of you who have sent in their dues, THANK YOU! If you have not done so, it is not too late! Your 2015-2016 dues should be sent to PO Box 62, Pierre, SD 57501. Payment will not only helps your organization function, but extends your protection too.

It is not only vital but a real challenge to keep our membership records up to date. Please, please inform us of any changes you have in addresses, names, e-mails., etc. If you no longer get your e-mail through your school, or have changed it, please apprise us of your current and/or preferred methods of contact.

Loren Paul was officially confirmed by the SDEA Board as the new Retired Program Coordinator. Many of you have worked with

him in the past and you may contact him at: 411 E Capitol, Pierre, 57501. By phone at 800-529-0090, ext. 131 or 605-224-9263, ext. 131 or by email at loren.paul@sdea.org.

I’d like to remind you to peruse other benefits of NEA membership --- search www.neamb.com. You might be surprised at some of the savings offered --- I was.

Another reminder --- this year, the SDEA-Retired annual meeting will be held here in Pierre on Friday April 8th 2016. Among other items on the agenda will be election of a President and Secretary for three year terms. Our by-laws in Article IV Section 5 --- state: Nominations of officers shall be open. A candidate for office must file a notification of candidacy with the SDEA-R president by January 15th. A 50-75 word biographical sketch for the candidate should accompany the members’ filing statement. The SDEA-R president will immediately report the notification to the SDEA headquarters office and the SDEA-R Executive Board. Notification of candidacy should be sent to SDEA-R President, PO Box 62, Pierre, SD 57501 before January 15th 2016.

Dorothy Falk, your membership/treasurer has provided the following numbers:  
Lifetime paid members: 458  
Annual paid members: 96  
Yet to pay 171  
Overall, our financial position is solvent --- we plan to stay that way.

NEA-Retired exists to meet the needs of retired education employees. We work with active NEA members to:

- Protect and improve retirement pension, and health benefits—including state pensions, Social Security and Medicare.
- Improve public education through mentoring, literacy, and intergenerational programs and activities.
- Achieve legislative and political action goals for education and education employees.

Retired members also:

- Continue their involvement with their State Association and the NEA and enjoy new and different activities with former colleagues and new friends.
- Volunteer in community-based programs that help make America stronger.
- Participate in national and regional conferences and seminars.

## Who To Contact

For questions, please contact:

**Loren Paul**

Retired Program Coordinator

411 E. Capitol • Pierre, SD 57501  
800-529-0090 ext. 131  
605-224-9263 ext. 131  
loren.paul@sdea.org



# SLO By the #'s

1,063  
Educators  
SDEA trained  
on Student  
Learning  
Objectives



Since June  
1, 2015  
thanks to  
a grant  
from the  
NEA

323  
Number  
of Hours  
Trained



467  
Graduate  
Credits  
Earned



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continued from front page

and now from Governor Daugaard. The consensus is the state must make a bold move for education," said McCorkle.

"While we need our leaders to be bold, we also need to step up and be bold as educators by getting involved in the process. Lawmakers must

hear from us and we have to make our unified voice loud and clear. That is the only way this will happen. I am asking all SDEA members of all to write a personal note to your local legislator. Communicate with them during the legislative session. They need to hear from you as their constituent who is an educator."

SDEA has developed several tools and resources for members to use throughout the campaign. Members are also encouraged to sign up to receive Lobby Line and sign the Be Bold Commitment card. All of the resources may be found at [www.sdea.org](http://www.sdea.org).

# Be BOLD



 **Be Bold for Schools, Be Bold for Teachers, Be Bold for KIDS**

## Three Ways to Recycle and Reuse Holiday Cards and Calendars

### Lynn Cashell

For years I have collected holiday cards from my colleagues to use to make gift tags. Using decorative scissors, cut the images from the front of the card into rectangles and other shapes large enough to write a greeting. Punch a hole in a corner, insert a ribbon, and you have a lovely gift card. My service club makes them for families who may not be able to afford extras at the holidays.

Our art teacher loves used calendars for use in class as collages, or inspiration for projects. I have also used the photos for Writer's Workshop character studies, settings, etc, depending on the subject matter.

### Elizabeth Ahlgren

I cut up my expired calendars and put them in our copy room for others to use on their bulletin boards. Of course my calendars are all tigers and that's our school mascot. I keep the pictures I like the best and then offer the rest up for grabs. Everyone can have some school spirit and my calendar art doesn't go to waste. I often laminate the heavy covers to use for file folders or for folders for materials I need to carry around the campus.

### Kay S.

I use old calendars to help preschool students recognize numbers and use the individual date area to practice writing them.

## SDEA Board of Director's Minutes

ADVOCATE MINUTES OF THE SDEA/NEA BOARD OF DIRECTORS' MEETING via Conference Call September 27, 2015 Face-to-face October 3-4, 2015

Present for the conference call in addition to President M. McCorkle were: O'Brien, Mehlbrech, Meyer, Soldatke (came on mid-call), Schutte, Sieverding, Farmer, Smallman, Aldrich, Canet, Olsen, Swenson, Jennings, and Salladay. Also present were, Plooster, P. McCorkle, and Mickelsen.

Absent from conference call were: Pourier, Chase, Gorder and Gravatt.

Present for face to face meeting in addition to President M. McCorkle were: Mehlbrech, Schutte, Sieverding, Canet,

O'Brien, Farmer, Smallman, Pourier, Sommers, Chase, Monson, Aldrich, McMahan, Swenson, Salladay, and Soldatke. Also present were Mickelsen, Plooster, P. McCorkle, and Gravatt.

Absent from face to face meeting were: Meyer, Olsen, Jennings, Baumann and Gorder. Quick introductions were given at the face to face meeting. Rolfs and Hillius joined face-to-face meeting for a short time.

Josh Thomas, Sioux Falls, joined face-to-face meeting Saturday evening and reported on his experience with Ed Summer.

Approved for SDEA to endorse the collecting of signatures and provide \$2,000 for #SDR+things2Do. (Monson, Soldatke)

Approved adopting SDEA Board

Policy 11.14 SDEA/NEA Gordon Horgen Memorial Scholarship. (SDEA Internal Concerns Committee)

Approved referring SDEA Board Policy 11.15 Food Handling for SDEA/NEA Sponsored Events back to Committee. (Swenson, Mehlbrech)

Approved Do Pass recommendation on changes to SDEA Board Policy 15.1 President's Expenses. (SDEA Internal Concerns Committee)

Approved accepting the reapportionment recommendation with flexibility of the geography. (Salladay, Monson)

Approved authorizing the leadership team to negotiate an extension of the MOU. (Sieverding, Swenson)





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www.sdea.org



## Social Media

[www.facebook.com/  
sdea.org](http://www.facebook.com/sdea.org)

[www.twitter.com/  
SDEAEducators](http://www.twitter.com/SDEAEducators)



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## Upcoming Events

### January 2016

- Jan 1 New Year's Day - offices closed.
- Jan 4 SDEA offices reopen.
- Jan 12 SD 2016 Legislative session begins
- Jan 12 SEKota Meeting - Yankton
- Jan 15 Last day to declare candidacy for Treasurer, At-Large BOD and NEA RA Delegate positions/changes to bylaws
- Jan 18 SDEA BOD Conference call 7 pm CST
- Jan 18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day - offices closed
- Jan 19 SEKota Meeting - Madison
- Jan 20-23 SDEA BOD Meeting - Pierre
- Jan 25 Black Hills Meeting - Rapid City
- Jan 29-31 MLT/WLT (West) - TBA

### February 2016

- Feb 2 Groundhog Day
- Feb 12 Lincoln's Birthday
- Feb 12-13 NEA BOD Meeting - Washington, DC
- Feb 14 Valentine's Day
- Feb 15 Ramia Boersma & Gordon Horgen Scholarship application deadline
- Feb 15 President's Day - offices closed.
- Feb 15 Susan B. Anthony's Birthday
- Feb 21 SDEA BOD Conference call 7 pm CST
- Feb 22 EGL Meeting - TBA
- Feb 22 Washington's Birthday
- Feb 26-27 National Leadership Summit - Washington, DC

