

The Educators'

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Volume 54 | Issue 2



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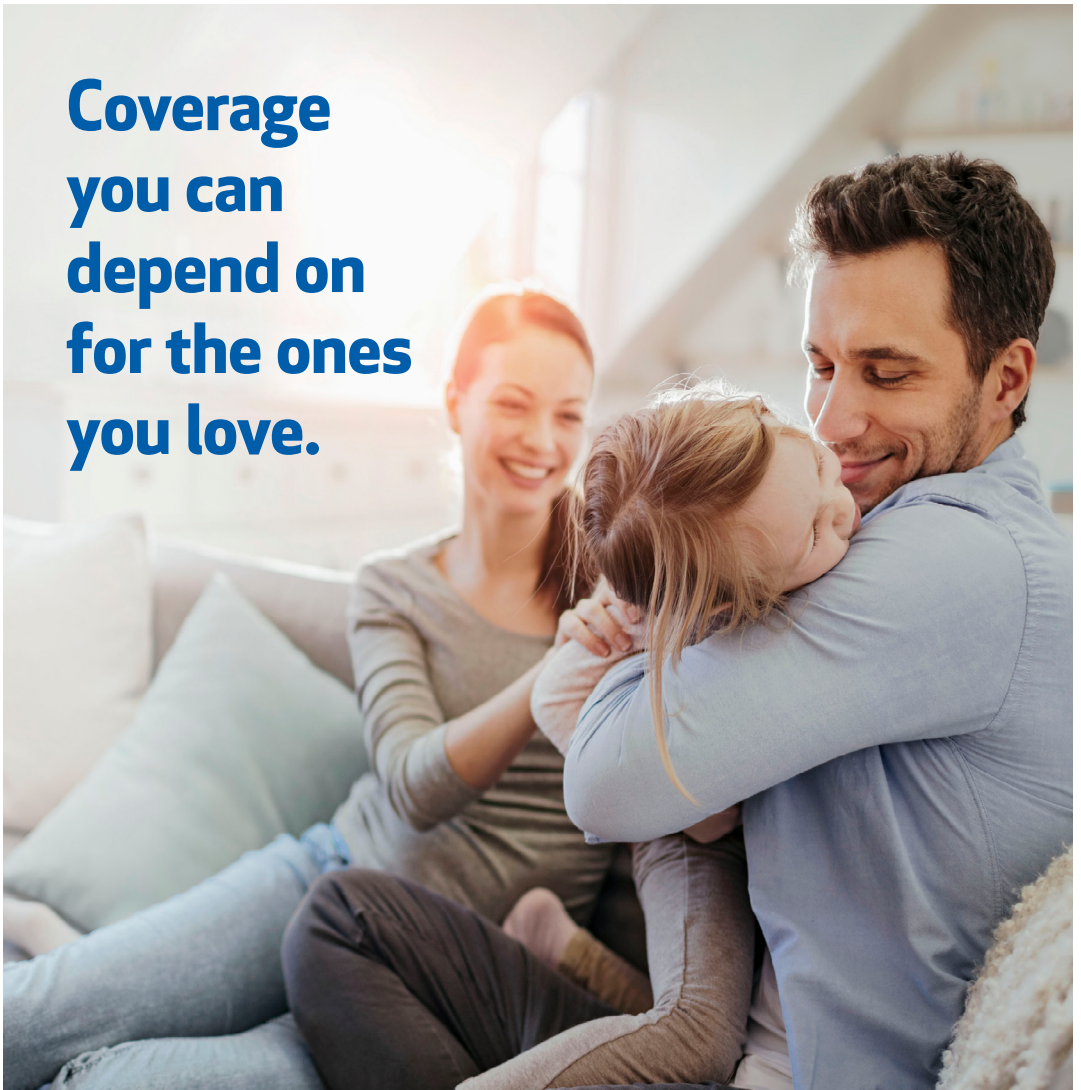
**South Dakota
Teacher of the Year**

Alyssa Cassels

5-6 Meet the 2023 South Dakota Teacher of the Year

11 Member Organizers Growing the SDEA! | 13 Proposed Social Studies Standards

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Questions or Concerns

Contact a UniServ Director today! 605-224-9263

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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.

NOV/DEC 2022

Volume 54 | Issue 2

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President's Corner

Make the Ask...

I was recently asked the question: What is your message to educators who seek to be “excellent”? After some thought, I decided my message is that every educator is an excellent educator in their own way, but you can't do it alone. Excellent educators support one another. They advocate for one another. Educators cannot do the work we do day in and day out if we try to do it alone, and sometimes that means asking for help.

Ask for help? For many of us that is a very hard thing to do. That's okay, but it's something we must practice if we are going to be able to meet all the needs of our students. The holiday season is upon us, and we are nearing the end of the semester. All of the extra school festivities and holiday gatherings compete for our time with end of semester tests and final grade submissions. While there should be lots of joy, the growing demands can be overwhelming. Educators are all asking the same question; how am I going to get this all done? Well, you can start by making an ask of those around you...making the ask for help.

I can't do that you say. Yes, you can. I know that seeking help from others is especially hard during this time of year because we know everyone around us is also busy and we don't want to burden them. However, if you don't receive the support you need from your colleagues, friends, and family, you might find yourself, like so many others, burnt out and exiting the doors of your schools for good. That isn't good for you, and it isn't good for our students. So, make the ask, because when you ask for

help, even for just the small things, you are giving permission for others to do the same, and that can be a gift for all educators.

Another way of making the ask for help is by encouraging other educators to join the Association. Why? Because more educators working together to advocate for the needs of our schools and students can accomplish so much more than when we try to go it alone. Our main message of great public schools for every student becomes more amplified with each new member who joins, and each new member strengthens the support system that our educators need. Right now, to keep great public schools, we must be a collective voice and oppose the proposed social studies standards. When you ask others to join our Association, you are asking for their help in making our schools better and our profession stronger. Yes, it's hard, but we must make the ask.

My ask of you, as the President of SDEA, is to remember you can't do it all alone – your fellow educators are here to support you, we are here to advocate for you, and we are here to help you. So, don't be afraid to make the ask.

Loren Paul
SDEA President

605-224-9263
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Meet the 2023 South Dakota Teacher of the Year: Alyssa Cassels

Alyssa Cassels, the 5-12 band director in the Deuel School District, has been named the 2023 South Dakota Teacher of the Year. Cassels has taught in the Deuel School District since 2016 and has grown the band program throughout that time. Alyssa took time out of her busy schedule to answer some questions we posed to help our members get to know more about this year's winner.

Tell us more about you – hometown, family, education...anything you want your fellow SDEA members to know?

“I grew up in Clear Lake, SD – graduated Alyssa Becht from Deuel School District in 2011. Now I live in Aurora, SD but teach at Deuel in Clear Lake. Attended Northern State University in Aberdeen from 2011-2015. My parents are still in the Clear Lake area, and I have two sisters and 1 brother-in-law. A fun fact is that when we gather for family dinners, we have more dogs than people! Ha!

I married Justin Cassels in 2014 and we have two dogs (he also graduated from Deuel and his parents are in Clear Lake – 3 brothers and 2 sisters-in-law on his side).”

What was your initial thought when you heard your name announced as the South Dakota Teacher of the Year?

“I was shocked when they announced my name as the State Teacher of the Year. I don't know if it registered right away, but it was the best feeling once it finally sunk in. The whole night following the announcement was a bit of a whirlwind of excitement and a roller coaster of emotions, but all around incredible.”



What are you most looking forward to over the next year?

“I'm really looking forward to creating and growing connections. The process up to this point has already given me amazing new encounters with fabulous educators and people that support education across the state, and I'm looking forward to expanding that network. I've been stuck in a bit of a music bubble for the first 8 years of my career, so I'm excited to grow that circle.”

– continued to page 6

SDEA Members Only:

Log into MyNEA360 to join the “SDEA Members Only” group to access SDEA/NEA member only documents and information. New users will need to create a MyNEA360 profile in order to be verified as an SDEA member.



Congratulations to all the 2023 nominees including SDEA members! L-R Jennifer Macziewski, Rapid City; Alyssa Cassels, Deuel; Loren Paul, SDEA and Jennifer Weishaar, Aberdeen.

What do you see as some of the greatest challenges facing public school educators and students in the coming years?

“I think the worker shortage, specifically teachers, is going to be a major challenge for public education in the future. I know our state is working tirelessly to support and encourage education, but I think it’s really going to hurt schools and our students’ education to be continually understaffed. We need to grow teachers and keep teachers in our state.”

What advice do you have for teachers who are just entering the profession?

“Don’t be afraid to ask questions and get involved in mentor programs. The first few years of teaching can be overwhelming, but if you are surrounded by people who support you and offer advice, it can change your whole experience.”

Is there something your students know about you that others may not?

“My students know my emotional, band-geek side better than anyone else. They know

that I cry tears of joy and when they nail a passage in music and their growth shines through, they are embarrassed when I geek out to music outside of the classroom, and they know that I’m always up for a hug.”

Best method of self-care?

“I really enjoy taking time to disconnect from the world. I love doing anything outside, playing with my dogs, reading, and exercising. I like to stay involved in sports and be active in my church.”

As a Band Instructor, do you have favorite song?

“I honestly couldn’t pick a favorite song if I had to. I’ve kind of been like that my whole life, but I definitely have specific playlists that are catered to different moods”

Any parting words of wisdom?

“My only other words of wisdom would be to say yes to things that scare you. I’ve found that the best experiences happen outside of my comfort zone.”

SDEA/NEA OPPORTUNITIES

GRANT, SCHOLARSHIPS, CAREER

SDEA/NEA EARLY CAREER EDUCATOR AWARD

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 GORDON HORGEN SCHOLARSHIP

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*

SDEA/NEA RAMIA BOERSMA SCHOLARSHIP

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 EDUCATIONAL INNOVATION GRANT

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.



SDEA Board of Directors meeting minutes can now be found online at NEA EdCommunities on the “SDEA Members Only” group page.

NATIONAL BOARD

for Professional Teaching Standards[®]

Congratulations to the educators who received National Board Certification in Teaching and School Counseling.

National Board-Certified Teachers

include: Brittany Condon of Rapid City and Krista McCorkle of Watertown

National Board School Counselors

include: Sherri Horan of Rapid City, Abby Danko of Baltic, and Allison Weideman and Krista Groeneweg of Harrisburg.

Registration is now open for teachers interested in beginning the journey to National Board Certification. The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards was founded to advance the quality of teaching and learning by maintaining high and rigorous standards. It is a voluntary, advanced certification that is like board certification in other professions. Upon certification NBCTs are eligible for reimbursement of expenses, graduate credits, and additional stipends.

For more information contact Joann Stephens at jc.stephens1984@gmail.com or Kathy Meyer at kathy.meyer.nbct@gmail.com.



Pictured from L to R: Kathy Meyer, Krista McCorkle, Brittany Condon, Abby Danko, Joann Stephens

A promotional graphic for the Spring Leadership Educator Conference. It features a green background with white daisies. The text includes "it's ABOUT our KIDS. SDEA South Dakota Education Association", "nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org Great Public Schools for Every Student", "SPRING Leadership Educator Conference", "Creating Safe and Supportive Schools", and "MARCH 3-5 | CHAMBERLAIN".

it's ABOUT our KIDS. SDEA South Dakota Education Association

nea NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION nea.org Great Public Schools for Every Student

SPRING

Leadership Educator Conference

Creating Safe and Supportive Schools

MARCH 3-5 | CHAMBERLAIN

Join us for this weekend event for learning how educators can use best practices in creating safe and supportive learning environments.



bit.ly/3yCHKUD

Professional Development Webinars

Nov. 15 | 6–7 pm CST/5–6 pm MT

Saving \$ with NEA MB

Darby Boyd, NEA MB

Jan. 10 | 6–7 pm CST/5–6 pm MT

Instructional & Classroom Strategies

Kelsey Lovseth (Brookings EA) and Erica Boomsma (Huron EA)

Jan. 24 | 6–7 pm CST/5–6 pm MT

Family & Community Engagement

Dana Livermont, (SD Family Engagement Center)

Feb. 7 | 6–7 pm CST/5–6 pm MT

What's Hot in Ed. Tech

Erica Boomsma (Huron EA) and Kelsey Lovseth (Brookings EA)



SDEA Bridge has moved!

To improve the look and accessibility of our online training we switched learning management systems. Professional development is now available at



<https://tinyurl.com/SDEAbridge>. You'll find new and existing content all at the new site once you create an account.

A promotional banner for a Summer Academy. The background is a tropical beach scene with palm trees and a blue sky. On the left, the SDEA logo (a red apple) is accompanied by the text "IT'S ABOUT OUR KIDS. SDEA South Dakota Education Association". Below this is a QR code and the text "PRE-REGISTER TODAY" and the URL "https://bit.ly/3SUDpEm". The main text "SUMMER ACADEMY" is in large, bold, red letters. To the right, it says "July 17–18th | Augustana". At the bottom left is the Augustana University logo, and at the bottom right is the NEA logo with the tagline "Great Public Schools for Every Student".

2023 SDEA/NEA Election

Board of Directors Positions

OFFICER:

President	(1) 3-year
Vice-President	(1) 3-year
NEA Director	(1) 3-year

BOARD:

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

Note: Please include a 150-word statement of why you are running for SDEA President, Vice President or NEA Director and a candidate photo.

Please include a 50-word statement of why you are running for the Board of Directors positions and a candidate photo.

2023 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, 2023 is the last day to notify Loren Paul, SDEA/NEA President, of your intent to run for SDEA Officer, 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, 2023**.

Members who wish to serve as a delegate to the 2023 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** in **Orlando, Florida**. Candidate declarations are due **January 15, 2023**.

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.

2023 SDEA/NEA Election

January 15, 2023 is the last day to notify Loren Paul, SDEA/NEA President of your intent to run in the upcoming election.

Member Organizers Play Vital Role in Growing the SDEA!

Every fall we organize the back-to-school membership campaign to grow our collective voice for the educators and students of South Dakota. This past fall we enlisted the help of member organizers who had and continue to have one on one conversations with educators in their districts about the importance of being a member of the Association. Let's meet two of them:



Kayla State

Sioux Falls Education Association
Member organizer 1 year



Melanie Zeman

Sioux Falls Education Association
First year member organizer.

Tell us about yourself – Such as where do you teach? What do you teach? How long have you taught? How long have you been an SFEA/SDEA member? Anything else you think members should know?

I am currently in my 11th year of teaching K-5 Special Education. I began my journey with SDEA/NEA as a student member when I was at Augustana College. I was lucky enough to serve as the President of our student association my senior year at Augie. When I began teaching in the Sioux Falls School District, I officially joined my local SFEA ranks as well as continued with SDEA and NEA.

This is my 25th year teaching and I am at Discovery Elementary in Sioux Falls. I taught middle school ELA for 10 years, I taught one year of 2nd grade, and this is my 14th year as a 5th grade teacher. I was a member of the student NEA at USD (in 1997-just a few years ago). My husband is a teacher in Harrisburg and is a member of the Harrisburg Education Association.

What made you decide to become a member organizer?

I was able to be on our negotiations team last year and sat in to negotiate our current contract. It was an eye-opening experience to see the inner workings of our district throughout negotiations. Grace Gill, former UniServ Director, thought those of us that were able to sit in on negotiations would be a good fit for the role of member organizer. I wasn't quite sure what I was signing up for, but as it turns out, it has been a very fun and rewarding experience.

I was fortunate enough to be part of our negotiations committee in our district this past spring. It was a very eye-opening process and it reminded me just how much we need to stick together as educators, we need to be one voice. When Grace Gill asked me to be a part of this, I wasn't sure what to expect, and honestly, I didn't think I would be very good at it. I'm now thankful she asked and have appreciated this experience!

— continued to page 14



Answering Questions About Your Union

How Well Do You Know Your Union Contract?

By using our collective voice and the power of bargaining, we work to improve salaries, benefits and working conditions so that our members can focus on supporting students. Your union also negotiates for better teaching and learning conditions so that everyone connected to the school — students and parents as well as all educators — benefits.

Read your contract, become familiar with it, and then seek out your association/building representative, local president, or UniServ Director if you have any questions.

Here are key provisions that should be included in your contract...

Association Rights

The contract contains several provisions that describe how the association operates and protects your rights. It contains a formal dispute process, usually called a grievance procedure. It may also explain your due process protections.

Salary: Your union negotiates your salary increases for the duration of the contract. Your contract may include a salary schedule, which spells out your current salary, and describes how and when you will earn more. Other contracts will have a hiring schedule which outlines salary placement for new staff, which is usually based on experience. Increases are typically based on an overall increase to the entire salary schedule or “moving up” a step or “across a lane” based on experience or earning continuing education credits or certifications, respectively.

Medical, dental, and vision benefits:

You’ll find details on plan offerings, your costs, employer contributions, eligibility, and more.

Retirement provisions: Your contract may include retirement provisions that are above and beyond the South Dakota Retirement System. Provisions for early retirement or other retirement savings plans may be included in the contract.

Leave benefits: You are probably entitled to different types of leave such as medical, personal, bereavement, and family leave. Learn how you accrue these benefits.

Working conditions: Your contract contains many provisions that improve your working and your students’ learning conditions, such as class size, healthy and safe buildings, supply stipends, among others. The contract also specifies your daily hours of work including any breaks, and the number of days in your work year.

Induction and mentoring/peer

assistance: Hopefully, your school district has an induction/mentoring program, so an experienced peer can meet with and coach you about classroom management, curriculum development, parent communications, and other issues. If your school does not have a formal mentoring program, seek out your building representative to introduce you to an experienced teacher in your school.

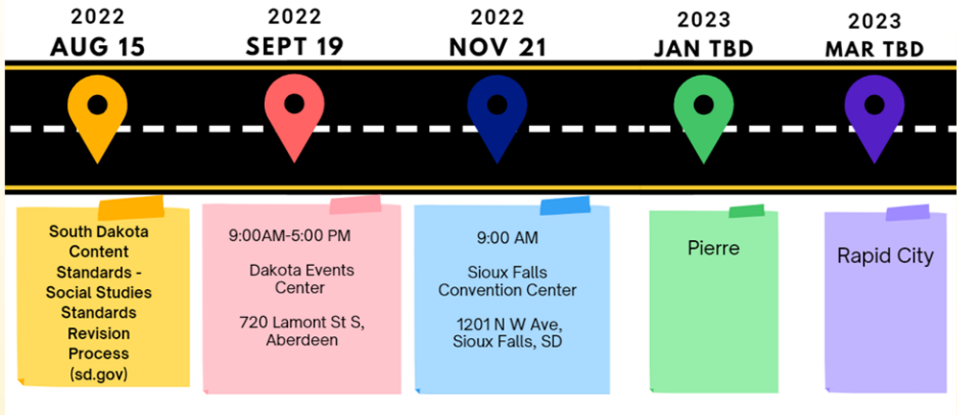
Evaluation: Your school district will have some type of evaluation system in place.

— continued to page 14

SD SOCIAL STUDIES STANDARDS ADOPTION ROAD MAP

The South Dakota Board of Education is responsible for setting academic standards for South Dakota Schools. Board members are appointed by the Governor.

After the Board has held the legally required hearings, it will vote to accept or reject the proposed standards.



707 Proposed Social Studies Standards comments received as of September 19:



615 oppose



67 support

25 neutral



Are you concerned about proposed social studies standards?

Join South Dakota’s educators who are working to ensure that the South Dakota Board of Education Standards adopts standards that give all children the freedom to learn accurate and age-appropriate history, geography, economics, and government of our country and world!

Next Meeting



*Nov. 21 - 9 am
Sioux Falls Convention Center
1201 NW Ave.
Sioux Falls, SD*

Get Involved



Local Treasurer’s Training

- Responsibilities as an Association Officer
- Reporting Association Income and Expenses
- Important Tax Topics
- Membership Dues/Reconciliation
- ACH payment option

Contact Holly Frederick at holly.frederick@sdea.org and Lathie Under Baggage at lathie.underbaggage@sdea.org to set up your training date!

— continued from page 11

What have you learned about yourself as a member organizer and or what have you learned about SFEA/SDEA?

I have enjoyed being able to meet with other potential members and current members. I have learned that I can use my voice and be an advocate for joining our education association. I would encourage anyone to step outside your comfort zone and become a member organizer.

I have learned that every voice matters, but collectively, we are stronger. I've learned that our organization stands behind their members and is constantly working toward doing what's best for kids and teachers.

What is your pitch to potential members? Or why should educators join their SFEA/SDEA?

Educators should join SFEA/SDEA for a variety of reasons. Melanie Zeman, fellow member organizer, put it perfectly. Joining is like buying insurance for your job. It is also a perk/ important to have the opportunities afforded members such as: NEA member benefits, access to your local president when you have questions, access to legal representation should the need ever arise, access to a support system statewide, and a voice at the table locally, state and nationwide. We need to join together and be one voice to support our students and the needs of educators.

First, I think it's important to make things more casual and personal. I appreciate that we were able to take donuts and coffee to all the schools and have time to simply visit with people. It was wonderful to see people we already know and to meet new people. These visits offered us an opportunity to talk about SFEA/SDEA/NEA in a non-threatening, non-judgmental way. Before telling any prospective members anything, we would ask them if they'd like to visit and get more information. If they did, we talked about all the things being a member provides for them: support, grant opportunities, being part of a universal voice to benefit kids and teachers, getting discounts, and protection (insurance for your job). We told people about having building representatives, a local president, a lawyer on retainer, a free \$1000 life insurance policy, help with student loans, and a personal insurance policy if something should happen. I don't think everyone realizes all the benefits of being a member, but that's why it was important for us to talk to as many people as possible.

Membership is the cornerstone of SDEA. Member organizer work is invaluable as we work to bring more voices to the work we do.

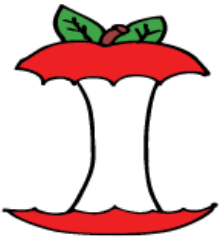
— continued from page 12

Learn more about the criteria and timing of the evaluation, as well as your rights.

Planning/collaboration time: All educators, especially those new to the profession, need adequate time to collaborate and reflect with colleagues so you can grow professionally and improve

your practice.

Educational/knowledge/skill improvement: Your school district should provide time, financial reimbursement, and other types of support for you to acquire more education and skills to improve your practice.



SDEA Retired

Happy Holidays!

During this crazy season of cooking, shopping, wrapping, parties, and running around; take a little time for yourself. Grab your favorite holiday drink, whether that's hot chocolate or mulled wine, and curl up with a good book or holiday movie. The world won't end and you've earned it.

Please remember that here at SDEA Retired you are appreciated. We don't want to lose track of you. If your address, email, or phone number changes; please let us

know. If you have a preferred phone number that you would like us to use, please let us know that too.

This year our Vice President and Treasurer are term limited. If you are interested in either of these positions, please contact either me or our staff liaison Phil Moore no later than January 15, 2023. The election will take place at our annual meeting on Friday, March 31. Save the date! We look forward to seeing you.

Mary Jane Chiles
SDEA Retired President

ADDITIONAL CONTACTS

SDEA Retired Staff Liaison:
Phil Moore 605-222-1920
Philip.Moore@sdea.org



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

Statement of Ownership

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UPCOMING EVENTS

November

- 11 Veteran's Day (SDEA offices closed)
- 14 Western Unit mtg
- 14-18 American Education Week
- 15 SEE Unit mtg
- 15 Saving \$ with NEA MB
- 20 SDEA BOD Zoom meeting TBD
- 24 Thanksgiving (SDEA offices closed)
- 25 Thanksgiving observed (SDEA offices closed)

December

- 2-4 MLT/WLT West
- 3 Budget Committee
- 5 NEA BOD meeting
- 23 NEA BOD meeting (tentative/virtual)
- 24 Christmas (SDEA offices closed)
- 24 Christmas Eve (SDEA offices closed)
- 26-1/2 Christmas vacation (SDEA offices closed)

January

- 10 Instructional & Classroom Strategies webinar
- 10 1st Day of SD Legislature/State of the State
- 10 SEE Unit mtg
- 12 Eastern Prairie Unit Mtg
- 15 SDEA Bylaws/Candidacy declarations due
- 16 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (SDEA offices closed)
- 20-21 SDEA BOD meeting
- 21-22 Budget Committee meeting
- 23 Western Unit mtg
- 23 EGL Unit mtg



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