

THE EDUCATORS'


# ADVOCATE

SEPT/OCT 2025  
Volume 57 | Issue 1



South Dakota Education Association

Welcome New  
SDEA President  
**Stephanie  
Hageman**

I   
**Public  
Schools**



## Inside this Issue

7 Summer Rewind

8 Q & A with new  
SDEA President

11 "I ♥ Public  
Schools" T-shirts



# NEA Member<sup>\*</sup> Exclusive

## A trusted and valuable benefit

As an NEA member, did you know you receive \$1,000 of term life insurance at **no cost** to you? You're already enrolled in the NEA® Complimentary Life Insurance Plan, but it's a good time to make sure you've selected a beneficiary.

When you do, you can have some peace of mind that your loved ones will receive their benefit in a time of need. This unique benefit helps ensure educators like you have additional coverage beyond what may be provided through your district. It's just one of the many ways your union membership works hard for you.

**Scan the code or go to  
[neamb.com/mycomp](https://neamb.com/mycomp) for a  
quick and easy path to update  
your beneficiary information.**



**\*Must maintain NEA membership.** This coverage is offered to Active, Reserve and Staff members, as well as to Life and Retired members who are actively employed in education.

DT460925

# Inside this Issue

4	<b>President’s Corner</b>
5	<b>A Word from Our NEA Director</b>
6	<b>Union U: Know Your Rights with Brooke</b>
7	<b>Summer Rewind</b>
8–9	<b>Q &amp; A with new SDEA President, Stephanie Hageman</b>
10	<b>SDEA New Ally Membership</b>
11	<b>Celebrate American Education Week with SDEA’s “I ♥ Public Schools” T-shirts!</b>
12	<b>Harrisburg Teacher Honored with National Rising Educator Awards</b>
12	<b>Get your SDEA Member ID Card on <a href="https://sdea.org">sdea.org</a>!</b>
13	<b>SDEA Opportinues</b>
14–15	<b>SDEA Fall Book Studies</b>
16–17	<b>Honored Women Educators of SD</b>
18	<b>SDEA Innovation Grant Winner</b>
19	<b>SDEA Retired</b>

### 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.

**SEPT/OCT 2025**

Volume 57 | Issue 1

**President**

Stephanie Hageman

**Vice President**

Jennifer Milliken

**NEA Director**

Kelsey Lovseth

**Treasurer**

Tess Canet

**Executive Director**

Ryan Rolfs

**Communications Director**

Sandra Waltman

**Communications Specialist**

Rebecca Feller

**Address**

South Dakota  
Education Association  
411 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501

The Educators' Advocate (ISSN 0013-2047) is published five times annually by SDEA/NEA, 411 East Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD. Periodicals postage paid at Pierre, SD.

**Postmaster:**

Send address to  
The Educators' Advocate,  
411 East Capitol Avenue,  
Pierre, SD 57501.  
Official publication of the  
South Dakota Education  
Association/NEA.



# President's Corner

**Stephanie Hageman**

SDEA President

605-224-9263 | [stephanie.hageman@sdea.org](mailto:stephanie.hageman@sdea.org)

## Leading with Purpose

In August, I had the privilege of joining the Rapid City Education Association as they welcomed the district's new educators. Rapid City's mayor, Jason Salamun, addressed the group and shared a message that resonates with all of us: "You are difference makers. Be proud of each life you impact as you shape our future generation."

As I begin my first year as your SDEA President, I am both honored and excited. I've already had the opportunity to travel across the state, meeting many of you, hearing your stories, and learning about your hopes and concerns. I look forward to continuing these conversations throughout the year.

This marks my 28th year in public education. I've served in many roles—paraeducator, custodian, classroom teacher, and most recently, director of Arrow Success Academy, Watertown's alternative high school. My passion has always been advocating for students and educators, ensuring everyone has the opportunity to thrive.

As your president, I have three key priorities: Elevate our profession by amplifying our collective voice and supporting professional growth. Garner the respect public education deserves by pushing back against harmful narratives and policies. Protect educator

autonomy so we can meet students where they are and help them grow.

I will stand beside you as we support one another, advocate for meaningful professional development, and speak up for positive change. Together, we'll work to retain great educators and ensure our voices are heard at every level.

We've all seen the attacks on public education—funding cuts, harmful voucher programs, and policies that divide rather than unite. But we also know what truly matters: creating safe, inclusive, and engaging learning environments for every student.

I will fight to ensure you have the autonomy to make the best decisions for your students. That means advocating for educator input in decision-making and building trust with administrators, legislators, and community leaders. We know what our students need—and we must be empowered to deliver it.

As this school year begins, know that I am here to support you. I hope it's a year of growth, connection, and impact. And always remember: *"You are difference makers. Be proud of each life you impact as you shape our future generation."*

*Stephanie Hageman*





# A Word from Our NEA Director

**Kelsey Lovseth**

NEA Director

[kelsey.lovseth@gmail.com](mailto:kelsey.lovseth@gmail.com)

## Why Back-to-School Membership Drives Matter (From One Busy Teacher to Another!)

The first days of school are a blur—new names, seating charts, lesson plans, and figuring out which drawer you stashed the good pens in. As teachers, we hit the ground running. But right alongside setting the tone for our classrooms, it's also the perfect moment to set the tone for our Association: strong, welcoming, and growing.

That's where membership drives come in.

Think about it—just as we invite students into a classroom community, we invite new and returning educators into our professional family. A membership drive isn't just about sign-up sheets; it's about connection. It's a chance to say: *You belong here. We've got your back. And together, we can make our schools—and our profession—stronger.*

From a teacher's perspective, I love that membership drives bring a little extra energy into those hectic first weeks. There's a buzz of excitement about the year ahead.

It reminds me that I'm not in this work alone.

So yes, my planner is already crammed with lesson planning, parent emails, and (probably) a sticky note that just says *Buy Coffee*. But taking time to encourage a colleague to join the Association? That's worth it. Because at the end of the day, the strength of our association starts with us.

So, if you're asked to help with a membership drive, say yes. If you see a new teacher in the lounge, strike up a conversation. If you're waiting for the laminator to warm up, talk about SDEA's amazing professional development offerings. If you've been meaning to update your own membership form—go for it! Because when we start the year strong, we set the stage for everything else that follows.

Here's to a new school year full of energy, connection, and a stronger union—together.



### Enroll Today!

Online professional development courses to fit your educational needs. Take discounted courses when and where you want after returning to school this fall!

**Learn More:** [virtualeduc.com/sdea](https://virtualeduc.com/sdea)



# Know Your Rights with Brooke

**SDEA: We are Here for You!**

**Hello, and welcome back to class!** I hope you're having a great start to the 2025–2026 school year.

For those who don't know me, I'm Brooke Quinlivan, General Counsel for the South Dakota Education Association (SDEA). Alongside our UniServ Directors, I provide guidance and advocacy services to members across the state. Whether your issue is big or small, we're here to support you.

As the school year begins, I want to remind you of the resources available through SDEA's advocacy services and highlight a few key points to keep in mind.

If your membership qualifies you for advocacy services, you may already be familiar with the major areas we assist with, including contract nonrenewals or terminations, ethics violations, negotiations, and legislative advocacy. But we also support members facing disciplinary or employment-related actions, including plans of assistance, reprimands, suspensions, Title IX matters, complaints, grievances, and representation at disciplinary meetings. If you're unsure whether your situation qualifies, reach out to your UniServ Director. Chances are, we can help—or at least guide you to someone who can.

Another important benefit of your membership is access to the **Educator's Employment Liability (EEL) insurance**.

This coverage protects you against financial damages arising from your professional duties, including civil rights claims. It also provides legal defense and potential reimbursement for attorney's fees in cases involving criminal charges related to your employment.

One critical reminder: **timing matters**. Many employment-related issues have strict deadlines for response or action. To ensure we can support you effectively, contact your UniServ Director immediately if something arises—even if you're unsure whether it's serious. Early communication enables us to act promptly and provide the most effective guidance.

Please don't hesitate to reach out. Supporting you is not only our job—it's one of the most valuable benefits of your SDEA membership. If you have questions or concerns, your UniServ Director is just a phone call or email away.

Wishing you a successful and fulfilling school year. We're proud to stand with you as you make a difference in the lives of South Dakota's students.

**Brooke Quinlivan**

SDEA General Counsel

605-224-9263

[brooke.quinlivan@sdea.org](mailto:brooke.quinlivan@sdea.org)



---

## SDEA Members Only:

Sign up and log into the new [SDEA.org](https://SDEA.org) to access Members Only documents and information like the SDEA Board of Director minutes and Educators Employment Liability (EEL) Program documents.

# Summer Rewind

**SDEA members stayed active and engaged this summer, advancing our mission across the state and beyond.** From strategic planning at the SDEA Board and Staff Retreat to representing South Dakota educators at the NEA Representative Assembly, members made their voices heard. Members also met with Minnesota Governor Tim Walz in Sioux Falls to discuss public education priorities. SDEA hosted another successful Summer Academy and welcomed new educators through district orientations—building momentum for a strong school year ahead.



# Q & A with new SDEA President, Stephanie Hageman



Stephanie Hageman stepped into her new role as President of SDEA on September 1. She brings a deep commitment to public education and is passionate about empowering educators. She brings both experience and a fresh perspective to this position. In this Q&A, she shares insights into her background, values, and vision for SDEA. This helps members connect with her as she begins this important leadership role.

## **What inspired you to take on the role of President of the South Dakota Education Association, and how has your experience shaped your vision for this position?**

*My passion for public education and believing I will make a difference for educators and students is my inspiration for taking on the role of SDEA President. My top three values in assuming this role are Advocacy, Perseverance, and Community. I have been a public school educator for the past twenty-seven years in various roles across multiple levels. Early on in my career, I learned the importance of advocating for students, and in the past ten years, this has grown into advocating for colleagues, students, families, and public education. This work is not always*

*easy, and this is where perseverance comes in. I am a very determined individual and will never give up when I am fighting for something I am passionate about. I also believe building community within SDEA is extremely important. One of my roles as the SDEA President is to present the voice of the members to the public. The stronger our SDEA community is, the more unified our voice can be to shape public education.*

## **What are your top priorities for advocating on behalf of South Dakota educators, especially in terms of policy, funding, and addressing teacher shortages?**

*Our students deserve well-resourced schools that give them the opportunity to reach their full potential. As SDEA President, I will stand with educators to defend public education from harmful policies and funding cuts. I will ensure SDEA continues to build strong relationships with leaders across our state, so we are able to recruit and retain educational professionals, craft policy that meets the needs of our students while maintaining our professional autonomy, and secure funding to meet the diverse needs of our educators and students in our public school system.*





**How do you define student success, and what strategies do you believe are most effective in helping all students thrive academically and emotionally?**

*I define student success as the ability of the student to set and achieve individual goals. I have found the most crucial strategy in assisting a student in achieving success is building relationships. I work with students and families to ensure they know I will do everything in my power to help them achieve their goals. I have assisted in helping them overcome obstacles, preparing for and finding a career, and graduating. My students and their families trust me and know I will always be in their corner, advocating and cheering for them along the way. These relationships are essential in creating an environment in which students can be successful socially, emotionally, and academically.*



**How do you plan to engage with educators and communities across the state to ensure their voices are reflected in SDEA's work and future initiatives?**

*One of my priorities is to engage with members across the state. During July, August and September, I have been out in the field meeting with and assisting members as they get ready for the new school year. I have listened to stories, concerns and celebrations. We have worked together to share our stories with new educators to show them the importance of belonging to SDEA, their professional organization. I will*

*continue to engage with members to ensure I am bringing their voice to the forefront—whether it is school safety, content standards, alternative certification, relevant professional development, or funding to ensure all educators receive a living wage and all students receive the tools necessary to succeed.*

**Can you share a moment from your career that deeply influenced your perspective on education and continues to guide your leadership today?**

*For the past twelve years, I have worked in a high school alternative education setting. Working with at-risk students, their families and community members has been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. Each of these students has brought obstacles with them they need to learn to cope with before they can achieve academic success. I have met each one of these students where they are at, have provided them with a safe, secure, and engaging environment, and shown them that I truly value each and everyone of them. I have advocated for these students on many levels, and together we have achieved success. These students have taught me how important it is to use my voice to fight for what they need—socially, emotionally and academically. These skills have shaped me as a leader and have given me the confidence to always step-up and speak-out for what I believe in.*

**Anything else you want to share?**

*I want SDEA to be a place where educators feel heard, supported and empowered. Together, we can create positive change for our public school system by supporting one another and ensuring educators have a strong, united voice as we stand up for the respect we deserve, professional autonomy, and the ability to meet the unique needs of our students.*

# SDEA New Ally Membership

## Top Ten Reasons for Friends, Family and Community members to join our movement!



Public Schools Are the Heart of Our Communities—and they need all of us.

The South Dakota Education Association (SDEA) is proud to introduce its new Community Ally Membership—a way for individuals who don’t work in public schools to stand with educators and support public education. As an SDEA member, you know the challenges our schools face and the importance of strong community support. By encouraging your friends, family, and neighbors to become Ally Members, you help build a powerful movement to protect and strengthen public schools across South Dakota.

### Here are ten reasons to spread the word:

#### 1. **Public Education Needs Allies**

Public schools are under attack. Ally Members help defend them from harmful policies and political agendas.

#### 2. **Amplify Our Advocacy**

More voices mean more impact. Allies help us advocate for strong, well-funded schools in every community.

#### 3. **Support Educators**

Ally Members stand with teachers and staff, recognizing that their working conditions are our students’ learning conditions.

#### 4. **Strengthen Communities**

Great schools build great communities. Ally support helps ensure access to quality education for all.

#### 5. **Show Up Without Being on Staff**

Ally Membership is designed for those outside the school system who still want to make a difference—parents, retirees, business owners, and concerned citizens alike.

#### 6. **Stay Informed**

Ally Members receive newsletters and exclusive updates to stay engaged with education issues and advocacy efforts.

#### 7. **Be a Voice for Change**

Ally Members are empowered to speak out, attend events, and take action in support of public schools.

#### 8. **Show Your Support**

With the “I ♥ Public Schools” Welcome Kit, Allies can proudly display their commitment to education.

#### 9. **Build Bridges**

Ally Membership connects educators with the broader community, fostering collaboration and understanding.

#### 10. **Protect the Future**

Encouraging Ally Membership helps ensure that future generations have access to strong, equitable public schools.

Together, we can build a movement that uplifts every student and every educator.

Encourage someone you know to become an SDEA Community Ally today!

**Become  
An Allied  
Member**



# ATTENTION LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS

## Celebrate American Education Week with SDEA's "I ♥ Public Schools" T-shirts!

American Education Week is coming up **November 17–21**, and it's the perfect time to celebrate the people who make public schools great—**YOU** and your fellow educators!



This year, SDEA is proud to feature its "I ♥ Public Schools" Campaign, and we're inviting **local associations** to join in a show of unity and pride. Designate a day during American Education Week where all members wear the same color or the official SDEA t-shirt to show your support for public education.

To help make this happen, SDEA is offering a **special discount rate of \$10 per t-shirt** exclusively for **local associations**. (Individual t-shirts are regularly priced at \$15.)

- ✓ **\$10 per shirt for local associations**
- ✓ **Celebrate in solidarity**
- ✓ **Show your pride in public education**

SDEA will work directly with locals and members to coordinate orders and ensure timely delivery. To ensure your shirts arrive in time for American Education Week, **order forms must be submitted by September 30.**

Let's stand together, wear our message proudly, and celebrate the incredible work happening in South Dakota's public schools.

**ORDER NOW to unite your local for American Education Week!**

**LOCAL T-SHIRT  
ORDER FORM**



### American Education Week | NOVEMBER 17–21, 2025

This event celebrates and promotes public education by highlighting the contributions of educators and staff and encouraging community support.

**Monday November 17: Kickoff Day**

**Tuesday November 18: Family Day**

**Wednesday November 19: Education Support Professionals Day**

**Thursday November 20: Educator for a Day**

**Friday November 21: Substitute Educators Day**

# Harrisburg Teacher Honored with National Educators Rising Award

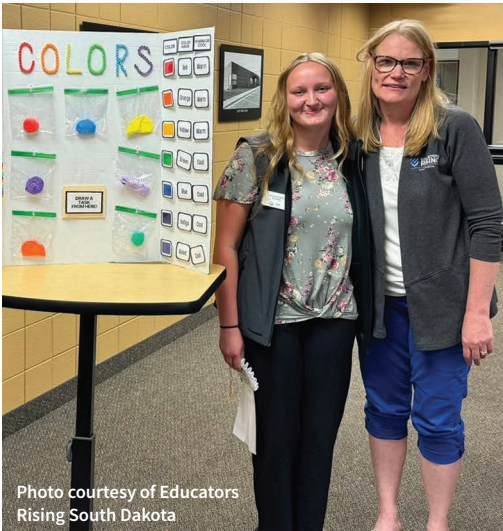


Photo courtesy of Educators Rising South Dakota

**Tracy Kern**, a dedicated Teacher Leader from the Harrisburg School District, has been named a recipient of the prestigious **Educators Rising Champion Award**. This national recognition is awarded to individuals who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to inspiring, developing, and supporting the next generation of educators.



## Get your SDEA Member ID Card on [sdea.org](https://sdea.org)!

**You can now print or download a digital copy of your SDEA Member ID Card through the website.**

Ever wanted an easy way to show you are eligible for members-only discounts, to have your member ID number handy, or just wanted to be able to say that you're a card carrying union member? Great news...

Now you can print or download a copy of your SDEA Member ID Card through the website at [sdea.org](https://sdea.org) on your **My Account page**.

If you have never set up a website account on [sdea.org](https://sdea.org), you can do it today! You will just need this information to verify your membership when you set up your account:

**First and Last Name** – Use the same first

and last name as your SDEA membership.

**Personal Email** – The website does not accept K12 email addresses.

**Member ID Number** – Find your Member ID on the mailing label of your SDEA *The Educators' Advocate* or by emailing [membership@sdea.org](mailto:membership@sdea.org).

Already have a website account but forgot your password? No worries! Go to **<https://www.sdea.org/user/password>**.

Reach out to **[rebecca.feller@sdea.org](mailto:rebecca.feller@sdea.org)** if you have any questions or need help with setting up your account!



# SDEA/NEA OPPORTUNITIES

## GRANT, SCHOLARSHIPS, CAREER



### SDEA/NEA's ESP Award

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

**Deadline:** *November 1*



### SDEA/NEA Friend of Education Award

The South Dakota Education Association/NEA is seeking nominations for the Friend of Education Award.

- The nominee must be a person or organization outside of SDEA/NEA.
- The nominee should have proven to be a genuine friend of education, educators, and/or students.
- The nominee should reflect the philosophy and principles of the association.
- The nominee, through leadership, acts and support must have made contributions toward achieving a first-rate education for students in South Dakota.

**Deadline:** *November 1*



### SDEA/NEA Human and Civil Rights Awards

The South Dakota Education Association/NEA is seeking nominations for the Human and Civil Rights Award to honor an individual, student group, or organization for their work in promoting human and civil rights.

**Deadline:** *November 1*



### 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 2023 Representative Assembly in Pierre.

**Deadline:** *December 1*

**For more information on all grants and awards offered by SDEA, visit [SDEA.org](https://SDEA.org).**



**Lisa Weier**

Teaching and Learning Coordinator

Lisa.Weier@sdea.org

**August 25 – December 5**

## **Cooperating Teacher Experience**

(Fall '25)



This course initiates the purpose and direction of student-teacher relations

to fully conceptualize teaching and learning in this context. Fundamental understanding of building relationships, communication practices, student teacher needs, strategies, and planning for collaborative efforts, and recognition of professional teaching attributes will form the core of this course.

Those whose student teachers have split placements (fine arts, SPED, etc.) may also register for this course; there is a condensed course schedule recommended for split placements.

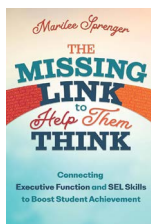
**\*This is a dual-enrollment course. You must also be enrolled through USD:**

EDFN 592 UE4 80457 Cooperating Teacher Experience – 25FA

**The last day to add or drop this class (census date) will be September 3, 2025.**

## Blended Learning Book Study

**September 15 – October 20**



## **The Missing Link to Help Them Think: Connecting Executive Function and SEL Skills to Boost Student Achievement**

by Marilee Sprenger

*\*This book is worth one graduate credit or 15 CECH.*

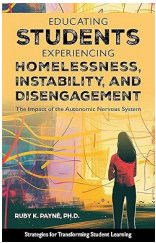
Each week, you will read a chapter or two, try out one or more of the suggested strategies in your classroom, and then come together with fellow educators for a one-hour Zoom session to reflect, share what worked, and discuss how these approaches support student growth.

The Zoom meeting will take place at **5:30 PM Mountain Time / 6:30 PM Central Time.**

- **September 15**
- **September 22**
- **September 29**
- **October 6**
- **October 20**

# Asynchronous Book Studies and Independent Study Courses

**September 15 – December 12**



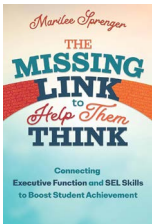
## Educating Students Experiencing Homelessness, Instability and Disengagement

by Ruby K. Payne, PH.D.

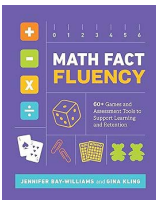
*\*This book is worth one graduate credit or 15 CECH.*

## The Missing Link to Help Them Think: Connecting Executive Function and SEL Skills to Boost Student Achievement

by Marilee Sprenger



*\*This book is worth one graduate credit or 15 CECH.*



## Math Fact Fluency: 60+ Games and Assessment Tools to Support Learning and Retention

by Jennifer Bay-Williams and Gina Kling

*\* This book is worth one graduate credit or 15 CECH.*

## Learning About and Learning with Artificial Intelligence in Education (Independent Study)



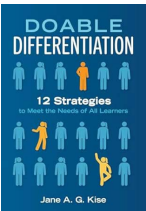
This course explores the foundational concepts of artificial intelligence (AI) and its potential educational

applications. Educators will learn to integrate AI tools effectively and ethically into teaching, learning, and administrative processes while fostering AI literacy among students. For your final project, you will use an AI platform of your choice to complete and then reflect on an activity from a list of suggestions.

*\*\*This course is worth 7 CECH for SDEA members only.*

## Project-Based Learning Book Study

**September 15 – December 12**



## Doable Differentiation: Twelve Strategies to Meet the Needs of All Learners

by Jane A.G. Kise

*\*This book is worth two graduate credits or 30 CECH.*

While reading this book, educators will design a personalized Differentiated Instruction Toolkit tailored to their students' needs. This hands-on project guides teachers in selecting key strategies from the book and turning them into ready-to-use tools such as choice boards, flexible grouping plans, or tiered tasks. You will turn research into real impact by designing, implementing, and reflecting on sustainable differentiation practices that support the success of all learners.

Courses are free with your SDEA membership and \$50 for non-members. Registration opens August 15.

# Honored Women Educators of South Dakota

Three women educators from across South Dakota were inducted into Honored Women Educators of South Dakota, formerly known as the Annie D. Tallent Club (1954–1993), at their annual meeting July 12, 2025. Honored Women Educators, an honorary organization of women who are currently teaching or retired, recognizes women educators who have demonstrated excellence in the field of education.

## New Inductees:



**Theresa Stehly**  
**McLaughlin School District**  
**Member #271**

Stehly started her music education career with 3 years as vocal music instructor in the Eureka School District in 1981. She

later moved to Sioux Falls and taught music at St. Mary's until 1987. She then taught private piano lessons for over 25 years and became a vocal voice teacher at the University of Sioux Falls for 16 years.

Stehly has been actively engaged in the community of Sioux Falls: Chair of Neighborhood Watch since 1997, lead Petition Drives for Drake Springs swimming pool and snow gates and was elected to SF City Council in 2016. She was Adjudicator for Piano Guild from 1996–2006, served on the Board of Directors for SF Community Concert Series, and taught community education gardening classes through the School Falls School District for 10 years, as well as choir Director for Holy Spirit Catholic Church for 35 years.

Stehly is an SDEA member, SD Music Association member, and American College of Musicians/National Guild of Piano Teachers.

Although she has a home in Sioux Falls, she presently teaches in McLaughlin (for the last six years) — fulfilling a life-long dream to work with native children.

One recommendation says, “Theresa has gained the trust and love of her students. She doesn’t just teach music—she strives to expand their horizons and stresses the importance of attendance and education. Theresa’s vision goes far beyond simply being able to sing the song. Theresa wants the students to see that they can have a future beyond the reservation, and that they can succeed in post-secondary education.”

Another says, “McLaughlin had not had a music program for several years when they hired Theresa and Theresa had her work cut out for her. At the first school concert, Theresa saw the disparity of wealth in terms of clothing and quickly worked with friends to solicit donations to purchase music themed t-shirts to provide unity and to dispel any feelings that they didn’t quite measure up. (She collects them, washes them, and stores them for the next event).



**Hallie Tate**  
**Mitchell School District**  
**Member #272**

Tate started her teaching career in elementary education, after graduating with her Bachelor’s degree from Black Hills State in

1979. She taught kindergarten and remedial math in Hitchcock for a year before teaching elementary special education in Tripp from 1980–1986. She began teaching in Mitchell in 1986, where she taught for the remainder of her career.

Tate has worn several education hats in



her years as a teacher. After 28 years in the elementary classroom, most as a third-fourth grade multi-age classroom teacher, she went on to teach Mass Customized Learning at Mitchell Middle School for three years, a multi-age classroom at the Abbott House for two years, and a year as a middle school English teacher. The gamut of her teaching career shows her versatility reaching all ages of students and all levels of education—from gifted to special needs. She had the distinction of representing both Longfellow and LBW schools as their teacher of the year.

One recommendation said, “Tate is, easily, the most naturally gifted and intuitive teacher I have ever encountered. She possesses an extraordinary ability to understand how each individual child learns and to craft personalized strategies that make learning meaningful, engaging, and effective. Her teaching is not just skilled—it’s inspired!”

Another comment said, “Hallie Tate is the embodiment of what it means to be an educator—passionate, innovative, compassionate, and deeply dedicated.”

Miles Rothlisberger, a graduate of Mitchell High School and a former student of Tate, wrote a teacher appreciation editorial in the Daily Nebraskan (October 16, 2015) promoting his appreciation of teachers years beyond elementary school. He specifically wrote about Tate, saying “she helped me in my times of incredible stress with calm words or stopped my babyish antics with soft but firm reassurances. She, along with Mom and Dad, taught me how to cope and accept what came my way and move on.”

He added, “During my third and fourth grade years, there were moments of extremes of self-anger and pity as I started growing up and trying to find who I was. Mrs. Tate was the teacher that brought peace and order whenever my mind began jittering with disorder.”



**Sandy Arseneault**  
**Custer School District**  
**Member #273**

Arseneault earned her BS in Education from BHSC in 1984. Arseneault started as a teacher’s aide in Pluma, SD in 1984 and continued

as an aide and teacher in Ellicott, CO from 1985–1988. Arseneault then worked at the Cheyenne Village Adult Residential Program until 1995. Following this, Sandy taught physical education and health (as well as district librarian, head volleyball coach, and student council advisor) in the Custer School District for 25 years. She earned the Little Red School House Award for the Custer School District for her work in education in 2015. Sandy served as the SDEA President from 2008–2014 and then became a SDEA UniServ Director in 2021 (and currently holds this position).

According to one recommendation, “Sandy has dedicated her life to supporting students, empowering educators, and strengthening the foundation of our school communities. Sandy has been an educator that has provided direct instruction, thoughtful guidance and systemic advocacy. Sandy has spent her career making sure every student has a chance to thrive.”

During the time as SDEA president, Sandy’s vision included organizing a summit on Teaching and Learning which brought together over 100 educators, administrators, and community members from local, state, and national groups. The result of the Summit was the formation of the Commission of Teaching and Learning working collaboratively with the Department of Education.

Sandy is also an involved community member. She is the President of the Spearfish Humane Society, a member and Chair of Women of St. Johns, and has served on the Custer City Council.

— continued to page 18

# Innovation Grant Winner

## Grant Title: Unsinkable

Through an SDEA Innovation Grant, Katrina Boyum is leading an exciting middle school project that immerses students in nonfiction by exploring the daring journeys of four teenage sailors who raced around the globe. The project’s objectives are for students to develop nonfiction literacy, enhance scientific understanding of weather phenomena, and improve communication skills. Over an eight-week unit, students will analyze severe oceanic weather, compare hurricanes and tornadoes, and collect local weather data using a Civil Air Patrol STEM kit. They will also correspond with relatives nationwide to compare regional weather patterns. The project blends reading, science, and communication skills, culminating in student-created weather reports, diary entries, and speeches. Learning outcomes are measured through pre- and post-assessments, with a focus on vocabulary, comprehension, and analytical thinking.



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 program gives 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, visit [SDEA.org](https://sdea.org).**

— continued from page 17

## Annual Book Award Scholarship Winner



**Tanley Goebel** (Oldham)  
Dakota Wesleyan  
University

Applications for this \$500 HWE “Book Award” scholarship are sent to all South Dakota universities each year. The annual HWE

Book Award is for a female student majoring in the field of education who is in the second semester of her junior year. This year’s winner, Tanley Goebel (daughter of John &

Angie Goebel of Oldham) attends DWU.

The DWU Education Department Chair, Ashley Digman, said, “Tanley is an incredible person and student. She has worked hard as a student-athlete at DWU, competing in track while also earning her degree in elementary education. She always gives us her full effort and turns in great work. She is a great student who is going to be an incredible teacher.”

DWU Associate Professor, Tessa Wede added, “[Tanley] is hardworking and dedicated and will be an amazing teacher.



It's hard to believe that summer is over and school has begun again. I have a request to make of our retired members. I would like you to consider running for public office. Our students and former co-workers need you! NEA offers workshops that help train you on how to run a successful campaign. I don't care if you are interested in running for the local school board, city council, or state legislature—education needs you now! With the virtual loss of the Department of Education and funding being withheld, redirected, and designated for vouchers, now more than ever, we need people who understand the importance of public education funding. Please consider running for any office that interests

you and sign up for the workshops that will help you organize your campaign. Information can be found on the NEA website or by contacting our office in Pierre.

You and your membership are always appreciated. Please ensure that we have your personal email address so that we can keep you updated on the latest developments in South Dakota.

Mary Jane Chiles  
SDEA Retired President

**ADDITIONAL CONTACTS**

SDEA Retired Staff Liaison:  
LouAnn Jensen | 605-220-1688  
LouAnn.Jensen@sdea.org



***Join Now***

.....

## Contact a UniServ Director today!

**Shannon Maxon** | Western UniServ Director | Shannon.Maxon@sdea.org

**LouAnn Jensen** | EGL UniServ Director | LouAnn.Jensen@sdea.org

**Rich Mittelstedt** | SEE UniServ Director | Richard.Mittelstedt@sdea.org

**Sandy Arseneault** | Plains UniServ Director | Sandy.Arseneault@sdea.org

**Steve Binkley** | Eastern Prairie UniServ Director | Steve.Binkley@sdea.org

**605-224-9263**



411 East Capitol Avenue  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-224-9263  
sdea.org



@sdea.org



@SDEAEducators



South Dakota  
Education Association



@SDEEducators



@sdeaeeducators

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### September

5-7 TNT - Anchorage, AK

### October

3-4 SDEA BOD Meeting

14 Western Unit Meeting

18 Plains Unit Meeting

20 EGL Unit Meeting

21 SEE Unit Meeting

### November

#### 1 Award Nomination Deadline

- SDEA ESP of the Year Award
- SDEA Friend of Education Award
- SDEA Human and Civil Rights Awards