

The VOICE

Nebraska State Education Association • www.nsea.org



NSEA
150+

2024-25
Member Guide



A Message From Your NSEA President

“Let’s get to work!”

I hope you are having a wonderful start to the new school year!

For the second summer in a row, NSEA members and our public school allies spent countless hours fighting yet another private school voucher scheme designed to undermine public education.

We made it clear to Nebraskans that educators will not give up on our kids and our public schools. We did not walk away from this fight when the 2024 Legislature passed LB1402 to nullify our hard work to put the repeal of LB753’s voucher scheme on the ballot. We did not walk away when we were given 18 fewer days to collect petition signatures compared to last year. The 86,000+ signatures that we submitted reflect the commitment you demonstrate every day when you work with kids: that we will do everything we can to serve students, no matter the obstacles put in front of us.

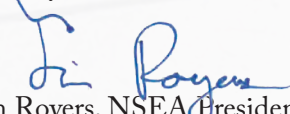
As we wait for the Secretary of State to certify that we submitted enough signatures to put the repeal of LB1402 on the November ballot, we faced yet another challenge: a Legislative Special Session that had the potential to unravel school funding in this state. Through the efforts of NSEA leadership and staff, along with your calls and emails urging lawmakers to oppose this reckless plan, we were able to stop the Governor’s plan.

As I step into this role as your NSEA President, I am looking forward to visiting your communities and hearing your thoughts on how we can strengthen the teaching profession and better serve our kids.

While I am proud of our efforts to defeat policies that would harm education, I am also frustrated with having to invest so much of our time and energy in playing defense. Rather than fighting against harmful legislation, I want to shift our efforts into crafting proactive, thoughtful legislation that will provide more resources for public schools, support teacher retention, strengthen the teaching profession, and ultimately help you better meet the needs of all students.

I am excited to begin my new role in service to you and our Nebraska public schools. My door is always open, and I look forward to hearing from you. Let’s get to work!

Sincerely,



Tim Royers, NSEA President



The VOICE

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VOTERS STRIKE BACK



EPISODE II: SECOND SUCCESSFUL PETITION DRIVE

Nebraskans unite to stop private school vouchers at the ballot box

Throughout her eight years in the legislature, State Sen. Lou Ann Linehan of Elkhorn has pushed for unpopular, expensive private school vouchers in Nebraska. Despite wide opposition, LB753 was signed into law in 2023. Not long after its passage, NSEA—along with a coalition of Nebraska not-for-profit organizations—launched the Support Our Schools Nebraska (SOSNE) petition drive to repeal LB753.

Signatures from 61,308 voters were needed to give Nebraskans the opportunity to vote on LB753. In just 90 days SOSNE volunteers far exceeded that goal, submitting more than 117,000 signatures to the Nebraska Secretary of State.

A Slap in the Face of Voters

No voucher program has ever survived the ballot box. Knowing this, Linehan and her crew of out-of-state, bad-faith actors poured hundreds of thousands of dollars into Nebraska, hoping to keep taxpayers from voting on the issue. Aggressive blockers were paid to harass and intimidate SOSNE volunteers. Betsy DeVos, a Michigan billionaire politician, largely funded the effort.

In October 2023, when official word came from Nebraska Secretary of State Bob Evnen that LB753's fate would be decided by voters, Linehan asked Evnen to reconsider the certification and to pull the initiative off the ballot. Evnen declined.

Acknowledging that voters would likely repeal LB753 at the ballot box, Linehan introduced LB1402—a new voucher scheme—in early 2024. In her cynical attempt to impose costly private school vouchers on taxpayers, Linehan's

LB1402 uses state general funds to pay for private schools while also repealing LB753, thus denying Nebraskans their right to vote on the issue. By a narrow margin, the legislature passed and Gov. Pillen signed LB1402 into law.

“LB1402 is a slap in the face to the 117,415 Nebraskans who signed the successful referendum petition to have voters decide the issue on the November ballot,” said Jenni Benson, a Support Our Schools Nebraska sponsor and then-president of the NSEA. “We will continue the fight to ensure voters’ wishes on this issue are heard and respected.”

Episode II: Fight Against Vouchers

Nebraskans are overwhelmingly opposed to voucher schemes and have voted to reject public funds for private schools at the ballot box on three separate occasions. Both LB1402 and LB753 would lead to the erosion of public education funding.

As Support Our Schools Nebraska prepared to launch a second petition drive in the spring of 2024—this time to put LB1402 on the ballot—the stakes were even higher.

“This has become much larger than it was,” said NSEA President Tim Royers. “This is a clear attempt to subvert the Second House in Nebraska—the people. That should be concerning for everyone, because if we let this happen, it sends a signal to the legislature that any time the people want to use their voice on any issue, all the legislature has to do is pass another bill to prevent it from happening.”

On May 10, 2024, SOSNE volunteers again readied their petition boards and began hosting petition signing events statewide. There were a few factors that made this petition

February 3, 2023

- Elkhorn Sen. Lou Ann
- Linehan introduces
- LB753, a private
- school voucher
- scheme to allow
- corporations and
- the wealthy to avoid
- paying up to 50%
- of their income
- taxes while reducing
- revenue to the
- state's general fund.

March 2023

- NSEA members urge
- lawmakers to reject
- the private school tax
- scheme by testifying
- in the committee
- hearing, meeting with
- their representatives
- and with calls, emails
- and postcards.

April 27, 2023

- After state legislators
- advance LB753 to
- the third and final
- round of debate,
- educators, students
- and other public
- education supporters
- marched to the steps
- of the Nebraska State
- Capitol to rally against
- LB753.

May 30, 2023

- Governor Pillen signs
- LB753 into law.

June 6, 2023

- NSEA and a coalition
- of Neb. not-for-profit
- organizations launch
- the Support Our
- Schools Nebraska
- petition drive to
- repeal LB753.

Summer 2023

- Volunteers gather
- signatures throughout
- the summer.

August 30, 2023

- SOSNE submits
- nearly double the
- signatures needed
- to give voters a
- chance to repeal
- LB753.



drive more difficult: A severely shortened timeline of only 67 days to collect enough signatures, along with confusion over the two voucher bills.



Lenz

“When talking to people, they didn’t understand that this was a new issue,” said Nora Lenz, NSEA Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee chair and Lincoln Education Association member. “We had to do a lot more talking to explain to them it was a new bill that superseded the old bill and that’s why we had to start the referendum petition process again. It took a while for people to understand.”

Lenz dedicated three-to-four days a week over the summer to collect petition signatures, traveling to courthouses and library locations in Tecumseh, David City, Wahoo, Schuyler, Fremont, Waverly and Eagle. Alongside Lenz was her 11-year-old grandson and many of her union colleagues.

“My teacher-friend Amy Broeker went with me to nearly every signing event. I volunteered with many NSEA members. We gave our time out of a deep desire to give to public schools and our students. I really enjoyed seeing NSEA members engage in our mission. We used our collective organizational power to protect our Nebraska public schools and fight for our students.”

Lessons from Last Year

South Sioux City Education Association member and veteran teacher Tracia Blom didn’t hesitate to grab a stack of petitions and get to work this summer.

Blom, who volunteered last year, already had a game plan in mind for her signature collection. In her hometown of

South Sioux City, Blom knew Hy-Vee was a hot spot not just for local residents but also for shoppers coming from Winnebago, Macy, Emerson, Walthill, Wakefield and Ponca. It also happens to sit close to several county lines. Through her conversations from last year, Blom was also practiced at answering difficult questions from potential signees.

“We have one private school here in town. One guy was arguing with me that he wanted his grandkids to go to the Catholic school. ‘OK, no problem,’ I said. Send your grandkids to a private school, but have you already gotten a guaranteed letter saying they will be accepted to attend that private school? You don’t get a choice at private schools. They choose you – or not. And if they don’t want you at their school, they won’t let you in,” Blom explained. “I told him there’s no guarantee with private schools, they can take you or leave you. They don’t have to accept your kids like public schools do. Every child is guaranteed a right to an education at public school. It’s why they’re publicly funded.”

Blom said after nearly four decades of teaching art to middle school students, she has the patience and stamina to outmatch even the most combative grocery shoppers.

“I have had kids who argue with me until they’re blue in the face and you know what? I’m not going to be mad. I’m just going to stay here and talk with you, and we’re going to talk until you’re ready to drop because I won’t be ready to drop,” Blom laughed. “I’ve been doing this for 38 years.”



Blom

Omaha Education Association member Wes Jensen spent the summer gathering signatures outside of the Orpheum Theatre, Old Market, Aksarben Farmers Market, Supernova volleyball games—

October 3, 2023

- Nebraska Secretary of State Bob Evnen certifies that SOSNE met all requirements to qualify for the Nov. 2024 ballot

January 3, 2024

- Senators convene for the second session of the 108th Neb. Legislature.

January 9, 2024

- Sen. Linehan asks Evnen to reconsider certification of the SOSNE petition effort.
- Evnen declines.

January 17, 2024

- Sen. Linehan introduces LB1402, a new private school voucher scheme.

April 20, 2024

- Nearly 500 public school supporters march to the Capitol to protest LB1402, which takes away Nebraskans' right to vote on giving public tax dollars to private schools.

April 25, 2024

- After narrowly surviving three filibuster attempts, Gov. Pillen signs LB1402 into law.

April 29, 2023

- SOSNE files the petition to repeal LB1402.

May 10, 2024

- New petitions are delivered to volunteers who begin gathering signatures to put repeal of LB1402 on the November ballot.

July 17, 2024

- SOSNE submits 86,000+ petition signatures to the Neb. Sec. of State to verify.



Jensen

just to name a few.

“It was frustrating that we had to do this again, and giving up my spring and summer was hard, but my top priority is my students and their families,” Jensen said. “Working in alternative education for my whole 17-years of teaching, I know that public schools are the places where my students and their families can belong, are welcomed and will be served.”

Jensen currently teaches at the Secondary Success Program (SSP), which serves as the middle school alternative program for Omaha Public Schools.

“For many of my students who haven’t done well in a traditional public school classroom, SSP offers the structure needed—behaviorally, socially, academically, and emotionally—for them to do well,” he explained.

For Jensen, gathering signatures wasn’t just about the work, it was about finding connections within communities and discovering a sense of belonging.

“Getting out and engaging with people honestly renews your soul,” he said. “Sometimes with the hacks on social media calling educators names like ‘groomers’—and even some of the discussion you see in our own legislature—it really feels like the world is against educators. But when interacting with everyday Nebraskans who thank you for what you’re doing and thank you for taking time to volunteer for this – you learn very quickly that in Nebraska, we really do love public schools. It’s not just a saying on a T-shirt. It’s real.”

To Believe in Democracy

NSEA-Retired member Karla Bachman set a goal of

gathering at least 1,000 signatures on the outset of the second SOSNE petition drive.

“I was motivated by two things. I thought this was a place where I could personally impact a bit of this year’s election issues,” Bachman said. “My second motivation was I thought it was a way to honor my daughter’s life and the things she stood for.”



Bachman

Bachman’s late daughter worked in politics and spent 10 years out of college working at the Capitol.

“She taught me to see beyond the messy, imperfect sides of the political world,” she said. “Through her I could see all the wonderful things it accomplishes.”

Bachman explained her daughter loved working on the side of justice and if she had been alive to see the passage of LB1402 and its attempt to subvert democracy, she would have been gathering signatures too.

“She inspired me and still does. So, I made being where people were and educating them my priority for 6 weeks or so and the sheets just filled up,” she said.

Bachman ended up exceeding her goal, gathering around 1,200 signatures.

The work of these volunteers and thousands of others culminated in a successful effort with more than 86,000 signatures submitted to put the repeal of LB1402 on the November ballot.

The Nebraska Secretary of State is working with county election offices to review the signatures and determine if the referendum qualifies for the ballot. Watch for updates at SOSNE.org, NSEA.org and in *The Voice*.

AN EXPERIENCED TEAM OF LEADERS

Your Association operates as a representative democracy

Your NSEA Board of Directors is a diverse group of educators who represent communities and school districts of all sizes. They are classroom teachers, coaches, higher education faculty, education support personnel and more. Their deep understanding of the needs and challenges in Nebraska’s public education system makes them exceptionally qualified to represent and serve NSEA members.

The NSEA operates as a representative democracy. Every member has an equal voice, and every member has equal representation within the Association. Every Nebraska school building has an Association/faculty representative. They work with members in their building and connect to the elected officers of the district-wide local Association. Each local Association is found in one of six NSEA governance districts (see map, page 7). Each governance district has a board of directors, and each district is represented on the NSEA Board of Directors, with each board member representing a roughly equal number of members. NSEA board members are chosen in online elections in late winter each year. Any Association member in good standing is encouraged to seek election to their NSEA district board or the statewide board of directors.

NSEA also elects one Nebraska representative to serve

a three-year term on the National Education Association Board of Directors. In April 2024, delegates voted to revise NSEA Bylaws to add the new officer position of Secretary/Treasurer. The Board of Directors appointed Renae Noble to fill the position of Secretary/Treasurer until Aug. 31, 2025. The Delegate Assembly will elect a member to serve the first full term of the new office next spring. Noble, along with NSEA President Tim Royers, Vice President Paul Schulte, and Nebraska NEA Director Edward Ventura comprise the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

In addition, members from every local association are eligible to seek election to serve as a representative to the NSEA Delegate Assembly. At that annual April business meeting, more than 200 delegates from across the state elect officers, set the Association’s agenda for the coming year, craft the Association’s foundational Resolutions, and review and update the Bylaws, which guide Association operations.

In every effort, members lead and pave the way forward—all on behalf of the children who attend our schools—in support of quality public education. For more details, email Royers at tim.royers@nsea.org.



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President '27
402-214-6948



Paul Schulte
Millard
Vice President, '26
402-516-2018



Edward Ventura Jr.
Omaha
NEA Director, '25
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Renae Noble
Chadron
Sec. Treas. '25
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Tracy Hartman-Bradley
Omaha
Metro, '25
402-740-6991



Dr. Tanishia Jacobs
Bellevue
Metro, '25
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Kathy Poehling
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Metro, '26
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Stacy Kester-Pearson
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Rosey Krauel
DC West
Metro, '26
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Marsha Edquist
Millard
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Kimberly Erickson
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Vanessa Brand
Oakland-Craig
Elkhorn, '27
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Matt McCarthy
Northeast CC
Elkhorn, '26
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Lisa Hanson
Neligh-Oakdale
Elkhorn Pres. '26
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Dee Ann Roy
Valley Co.- Arcadia
Sandhills, '27
308-390-6136



Mary Gregoski
Palmer
Sandhills Pres., '26
308-750-5248

DISTRICT OFFICERS

These members have been elected to lead NSEA at the District level:

■ Metro District

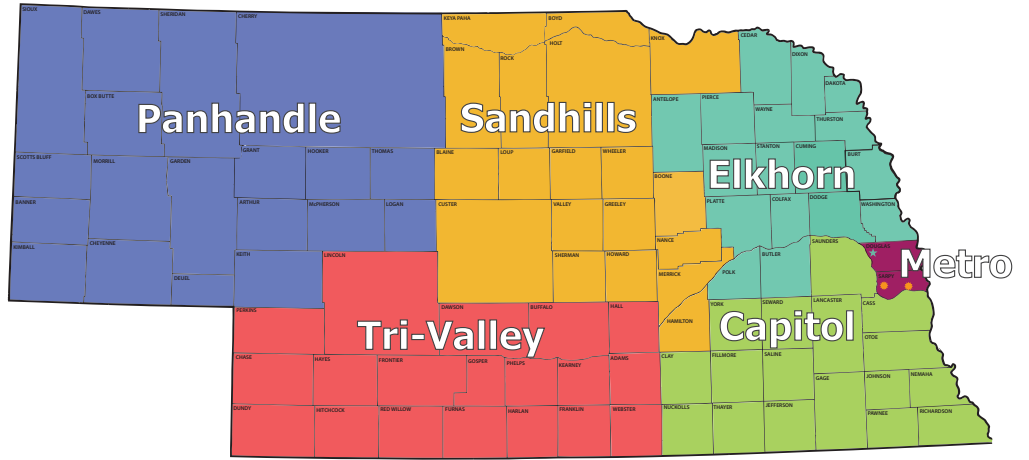
President Marsha Edquist, Millard
 Vice Pres..... Stacie Stevens, Omaha
 Treasurer Carrie Pratt, Omaha
 Secretary Julie Adams, Bellevue
 Exec Comm..... Terri Childers, Omaha
 Audra Gibbons, Omaha
 Amy Smith, Omaha
 Grant Christiansen, Millard
 Stacy Johnson, Millard
 Gail Sherrell, Papillion La Vista
 Carla Bobier, Bellevue
 Judith Stucky, Westside
 Two vacancies

■ Elkhorn District

President Lisa Hanson, Neligh-Oakdale
 Vice Pres..... Kristi Rastede, Northeast CC
 Sec./Treas..... Pamela Anderson, Hartington
 Exec Comm..... Carrie Sheppard, Battle Creek
 Amanda Dennis, Arlington
 Michele Brand, South Sioux City
 Mackenzie Waltke, Norfolk
 Sophie Hermelbracht, East Butler
 One vacancy

■ Sandhills District

President Mary Gregoski, Palmer
 Vice Pres..... Whitney Hake, Palmer
 Treasurer Sarah Hill, St. Paul
 Secretary Becky Meyer, Palmer



In order to comply with NEA guidelines, the ● Gretna Education Association and ● Springfield/Platteview Education Association will be included in Capitol District, and ★ Metro Community College Education Association is included in Elkhorn District.

Exec Comm..... Lynette Svenson, Callaway
 Mandy Evans, Ainsworth
 Katrina Hall, Broken Bow
 Stephanie Holdsworth, St. Paul

■ Capitol District

President Julie Colby, Lincoln
 Vice Pres..... Jordan Martin, Wilber-Clatonia
 Treasurer Vacant
 Secretary Shari Anderson, Lincoln
 Exec Comm..... Deana Kumpf, Lincoln
 Kate Regler, Lincoln
 Nicole Lopez-Bettendorf, Lincoln
 Devin Garcia, Diller-Odell

■ Tri-Valley District

President Ben Welsch, Hastings
 Vice Pres..... Jade Bartunek, Hastings

Treasurer Angie Dickey, Trenton
 Secretary Holly Ortega, Grand Island
 Exec Comm..... Becky Mousel, Minden
 Lori Pflaster, Lexington
 Judy Henning, UNK
 Janet Sheaffer, Chase County
 Robin Henrichs, McCook
 Abby Brehm, Hastings

■ Panhandle District

President Dash Rohan, Sioux County
 Vice Pres..... Vacant
 Treasurer Matt Chrisman, Mitchell
 Secretary Shannon Kinsella, Alliance
 Exec Comm..... Renee Miller, Scottsbluff
 Jessica Foland, Scottsbluff
 Four vacancies



Melissa Boutwell
 Lexington
 Tri-Valley, '26
 308-991-0509



Elena Garcia
 Grand Island
 Tri-Valley, '25
 308-765-1096



Bailey Smith
 Eustis-Farnam
 Tri-Valley, '27
 308-325-9702



Ben Welsch
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Andrew Lenzen
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Dash Rohan
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 402-646-5381



Deb Rasmussen
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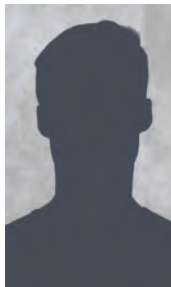
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Gina Boltz
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Julie Colby
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VACANT



John Heineman
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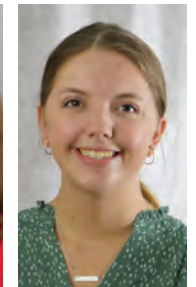
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 Higher Ed, '27
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Jenny Wood
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Jillian Buzzard
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 Aspiring Ed Pres. '25
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ADVOCATING FOR YOU



NSEA's mission to serve and support educators includes advocating for education policy. Every educator in the state is affected by the policy decisions made by Nebraska state lawmakers.

In the 2024 regular legislative session, your NSEA Government Relations team tracked more than 250 education and school finance-related legislative proposals. More than 370 bills were submitted to the governor for his approval including a mid-biennium budget bill that increases state aid to education. Here are some of the major education and school finance bills NSEA advocated for:

Paid Student-Teaching

NSEA supported the Attracting Excellence to Teaching Program that allows eligible students enrolling for a student-teaching semester to apply for a forgivable loan of up to \$3,000 for the student-teaching semester and receive up to a total of \$6,000 for the year. NSEA has long advocated for student teachers to be paid and recognized for the significant time and effort they invest in their training, as they often take on substantial teaching responsibilities.

New Pathways for ESPs

The Special Educators of Tomorrow Act opens new pathways for educational support professionals (ESPs) to apply for additional scholarships or loans if they plan to enroll in an eligible institution for

special education teaching. NSEA supports this because ESPs already in the classroom have proven their ability to work with students. For those with at least two years of direct support professional experience this act will allow eligible student to apply for scholarships of up to \$2,500 and loans not exceeding \$4,000 per year, with specific conditions for repayment outlined in a contract.

Special Education

NSEA also supported the Special Education Teacher Forgivable Loan Program Act passed by the legislature which will assist with the high need for special education teachers. The act offers forgivable loans to those who commit to teaching in Nebraska following their certification as a teacher with a special education endorsement.

Loan Forgiveness

The Teach in Nebraska Today Program aims to attract individuals to the teaching profession through student loan repayment assistance or grants for classroom service. Grants up to \$5,000 per year for up to five years are available to Nebraska residents teaching full-time for five years or less with an income below \$55,000.

From student-teaching to retirement, NSEA works to support and advocate for educators at every stage of their career.

Special Session Concludes with Property Tax Relief

K-12 School Funding Spared for Now

The 2024 Nebraska Special Legislative Session concluded on Tuesday, Aug. 20, with the passage of a property tax relief measure and budget cuts. Below are some key takeaways for education:

K-12 Public Schools: Gov. Jim Pillen's initial Special Session proposal, which included draconian lids on local schools, and which NSEA opposed, **did not pass**. The legislation that was passed does not directly impact K-12 public school funding. The early proposals, including LB1 and LB9, which would have affected local school boards' ability to fund school needs, were not included in the final package. This is a relief for our public schools and the students they serve.

Property Tax Relief: The Legislature passed LB34, which provides \$185 million in new property tax relief. This bill incorporates a key idea from Sen. Jen Day's LB12, which "front-loads" existing income tax credits for property taxes paid, making the credits automatically appear on Nebraskans' property tax statements rather than requiring taxpayers to request those credits.

Budget Cuts: To fund LB34, the Legislature passed LB2 and LB3 enacting \$117 million in budget cuts, including a \$25 million reduction in the state's Health and Human Services budget, which will impact essential state services.

Revenue Caps: LB34 also caps municipal and county governments' ability to collect more in property taxes than the greater of the inflation rate or 0% in times of deflation, compared to the previous year. Exceptions are made for public safety services, emergencies, and voter-approved measures.

Defeated Sales Tax Increases: It is important to note that the final legislation did not include the Governor's proposals to add new sales taxes on goods or services, as well as the increased "sin" taxes that were initially proposed by Governor Pillen and lawmakers.

Educator's Liability Policy Protection Available Online

Every member of the NSEA is covered by the Educator's Liability (EEL) insurance policy purchased by the National Education Association. No monthly insurance premium from members is required.

The policy provides \$3 million per member per occurrence for legal defense costs in non-civil rights claims; \$1 million in liability insurance per member per occurrence for non-civil right issues or claims; \$300,000 per member per occurrence for civil rights issues or claims; \$35,000 in attorney fee reimbursement for criminal proceedings; \$1,000 for bail bond; \$500 for assault-related personal property damage; and \$1 million per member per occurrence for claims involving medical and related arts.

Full EEL policy and details may be found at www.nsea.org/members-only.

The following occurrences should be reported immediately to the NSEA: any allegation or incident involving the death or injury requiring medical attention to a student arising out of a school activity; the receipt of a notice of claim, lien letter from an attorney, or service of a summons or lawsuit; or any situation you believe to be covered by the policy.

Do not contact an attorney to represent you before contacting NSEA headquarters at (402) 475-7611.

Law Firm Ready to Serve You

NSEA stands out as the only education association with legal counsel based in Nebraska. The attorneys at Norby and Welding LLP are retained by NSEA to assist association members with legal issues arising from their employment. Specializing in education, employment, and labor law, the firm has represented clients in thousands of administrative and judicial proceedings. With a statewide presence and a combined six decades of experience, Norby and Welding attorneys Scott J. Norby, Nicholas J. Welding, and Jonathan C. Hunzeker are dedicated advocates for association members. Norby and Welding is recognized as one of USA Today's Best Law Firms in Education Law.



Scott Norby



Nick Welding



John Hunzeker

THE CHILD CARE CRISIS IN NEBRASKA IS HURTING EVERYONE.



Quality early childhood education supports children's healthy development and future learning. Yet, too many Nebraska families can't find quality, affordable care.

Let's solve the child care crisis. It's not going to solve itself.

Support early childhood education at:

NebraskaCaresForKids.org

NSEA DUES BREAKDOWN 2024-25

ADVOCACY & COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: \$219.36

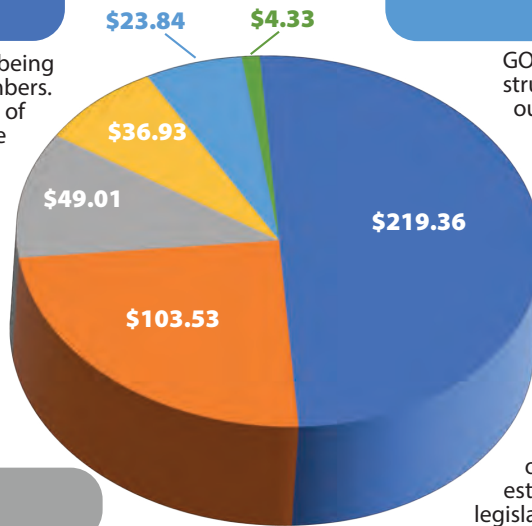
GOAL: NSEA will advance the economic well-being and secure the contractual rights of our members. Expected outcomes include protection of collective bargaining rights, and an increase in the capacity of staff and members to promote member rights.

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT: \$36.93

GOAL: NSEA will partner with national and local affiliates to strengthen our organizational capacity. Expected outcomes include strengthening of member engagement and offering professional development growth in the Association and the profession.

PARTNERSHIPS & POLICY ENGAGEMENT: \$49.01

GOAL: NSEA supports a public policy environment that promotes and protects public education. Expected outcomes include building and strengthening partnerships with external stakeholders and improving educator effectiveness in public policy engagement with candidates and elected officials.



GOVERNANCE: \$23.84

GOAL: The NSEA will support governance structures that are responsive to the needs of our membership. Expected outcomes include monitoring and adjusting Association governance structures across the state to increase member representation and to increase member engagement in NSEA leadership and governance.

SOCIAL & RACIAL JUSTICE: \$4.33

GOAL: NSEA will advance a culture of social and racial justice by improving educational opportunities for ALL students and by building respect for the worth, dignity and equality of every individual in our diverse society. Expected outcomes include establishment and promotion of an ongoing legislative agenda that advances human and civil rights and recruitment and retention of a diverse population of educators.

OPERATIONS \$103.53

GOAL: The NSEA will maintain sound financial practices and the corporate structure necessary to support a strong organization.

NEA DUES BREAKDOWN 2024-25

Build Safe, Healthy, Inclusive Learning Environments: \$5.56

Support the development of modern, safe and supportive learning environments that are affirming to all students and employees and resourced to meet the academic/developmental needs of today's students.

Support Professional Excellence and Respect: \$13.43

Enhance and maintain an enterprise-wide system of Association-convened, member-led professional learning and supports for all educators across their career continuum to ensure student success, to diversify the professions, to continuously improve their professional skills and to secure professional authority, autonomy and compensation.

Enterprise Operations: \$70.78

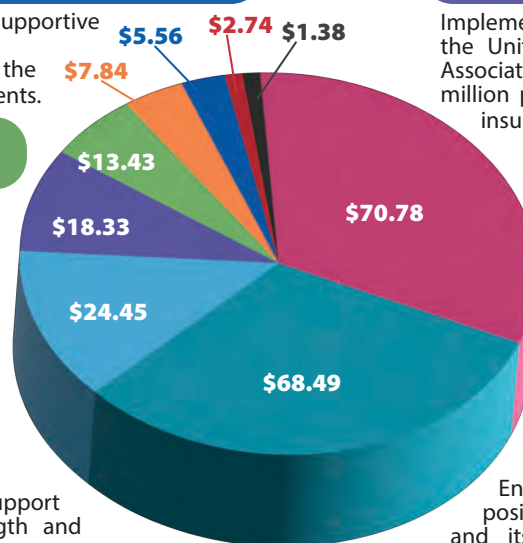
Ongoing functions across the enterprise that support the Strategic Objectives, build lasting strength and sustain the organizational infrastructure.

Strengthen Public Education as the Cornerstone of Democracy: \$24.45

Use all available means, including organizing, collective action, policy, legal, legislative and electoral, to safeguard the rights of students, communities and educators; to advance economic justice; to protect the future of public education; and to ensure that students are prepared in a learner-centered environment to participate fully in our democratic society.

Contingency: \$1.38

Provide funding for emergencies at the national, state or local levels.



Legal and Insurance Support: \$18.33

Implement advocacy programs for members, including the Unified Legal Services Program, Fidelity Bond, Association Professional Liability insurance and a \$1 million per member Educators Employment Liability insurance program.

Advance Racial Justice and Social Justice: \$7.84

Support members in advancing racial justice and social justice in education and improving conditions for all students, families and communities through awareness, capacity-building, partnership and individual and collective action.

Enhance Professional Regard: \$2.74

Enhance member and public recognition of the positive contributions of the NEA, its affiliates and its members; demonstrate the value that the organization provides to educators, students and communities; and the positive outcomes to the public education system when professionals are in union with one another.

Enhance Organizational Capacity: 68.49

Develop the collective organizational proficiency across our association to advance the mission of the NEA and its Affiliates, with focus on Member Engagement; Organizing and Connectedness; Educator Voice, Autonomy and Leadership; Racial Justice Culture; Coalitions and Partnerships; Dynamic Alignment; and Enterprise/Affiliate Health.

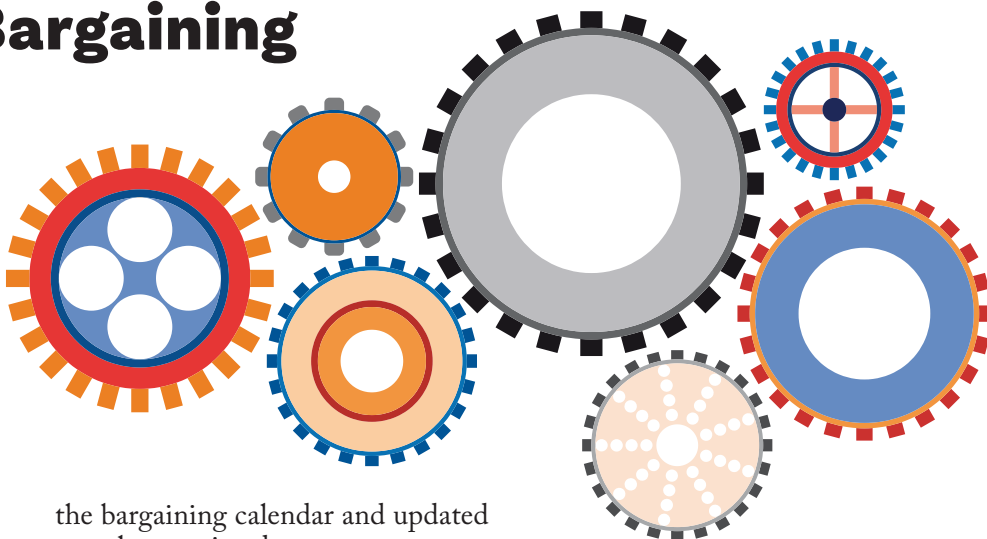
Gear Up for Success: Essential Steps to Prepare for Collective Bargaining

Collective bargaining empowers educators by giving them a voice in their workplace, leading to fairer wages and benefits. This process not only enhances teacher recruitment but also boosts retention rates. By negotiating collectively, teachers can secure better compensation, benefits, and working conditions. Since the conditions in which teachers work directly impact students' learning environments, addressing these issues through bargaining benefits everyone involved.

Key topics for negotiation include salary, planning time, paid leave, health insurance and other benefits. For these negotiations to proceed, your local association must either be recognized by the employer as the bargaining agent for the year or be certified as the permanent bargaining agent for your school.

As the bargaining season approaches this fall, NSEA's Collective Bargaining Specialist Jen Dubas shares the following tips for local associations:

1. Stay in touch with your NSEA Organizational Specialist about upcoming bargaining opportunities and available resources, including



- the bargaining calendar and updated sample negotiated agreement.

2. Community college and K-12 locals should prepare and submit their 2026-27 recognition request letter now so the board can act on recognizing the local as the bargaining agent for next fall's negotiations of the 2026-27 agreement.

3. Survey association members about issues and priorities before you head to the bargaining table.

4. Access NSEA's microsearch database of agreements at www.nsea.org/collective-bargaining.

5. Organize your negotiations team so roles and responsibilities are clear during both preparation

and bargaining.

6. Be ready to begin negotiations by Nov. 1 for K-12 and community college locals and by Sept. 1 for state employee groups.

7. Stay in touch with your organizational specialist throughout the process. They can help you comply with the bargaining calendar, learn more about area settlements and be aware of trending language proposals being offered by other district boards and local education associations.

Remember, educators have more strength in numbers and never is that truer than at the bargaining table.

Permanent Certification Status Eliminates Yearly Recognition Request

Certificated staff in six school districts voted to attain permanent certification status with the Nebraska Commission of Industrial Relations this year.

Bargaining unit members in Conestoga, Elkhorn, Nebraska City, Sumner-Eddyville-Miller, Wilber-Clatonia and Winnebago all voted in favor of certification in elections conducted by the CIR over the past eight months. In each case members voted to certify their local education association as the permanent bargaining agent for certificated, non-supervisory staff.

"These locals made an incredibly important step by achieving the certification of the association as permanent bargaining agent. It's a big step that will save them time and energy in the long run" said Collective Bargaining Specialist Jen Dubas.

Under provisions of a 2011 rewrite of the state's collective bargaining statutes, local associations are required each year to formally request that the local school board recognize

the local association as the bargaining agent for members. That recognition requires a vote of the school board.

With permanent certification, however, a local association can forego the formal request, and instead simply work with the board to set dates to commence bargaining. Statutorily, those negotiations must begin by Nov. 1 each year.

Certification elections are conducted by the Nebraska Commission of Industrial Relations. NSEA staff and attorneys work with local leaders at each site to ensure the CIR's rigid guidelines are met, that elections are conducted fairly and properly, and that all members of the bargaining unit – including non-members – have their voice heard through the balloting.

Currently, 98 of 263 PK-12 and ESU local associations have attained permanent certification status.

Local association leaders interested in seeking permanent certification status should contact their NSEA organizational specialist at 1-800-742-0047.



RANKINGS & ESTIMATES

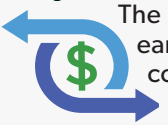
KEY TAKEAWAYS



The national average public school teacher salary rose to \$69,544 in 2022-23, a 4.1% increase over the previous year, according to the 2024 NEA Rankings and Estimates report.



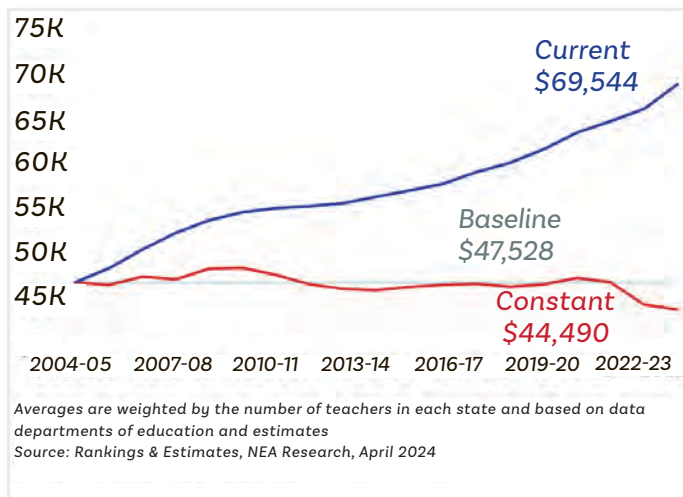
Adjusted for inflation, however, on average, teachers are making 5.3% less than they did 10 years ago.



The "union advantage" is very real. Teachers earn 26% more, on average, in states with collective bargaining, according to the 2024 NEA Teacher Salary Benchmark report.

The Decline in National Average Teacher Pay

Teachers make on average 5% less than 10 years ago, and 9% less than the peak in 2009-10, adjusted for inflation



What makes a difference

According to the new reports, teachers earn 26% more, on average, in states with collective bargaining, and education support professionals earn 16% more. The starting salary of teachers in these states is \$1,653 more than in states without a bargaining law.

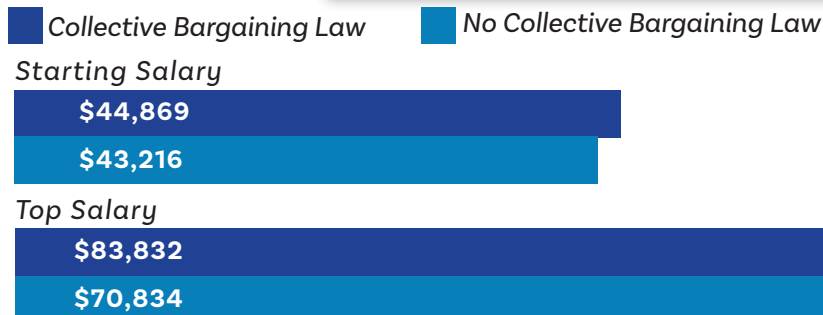


Chart: State Teacher Salary Benchmark Data, FY 2022-23, NEA CBMA, April 2024

NEBRASKA

AVERAGE TEACHER SALARY

\$58,753²
#34
IN THE NATION

AVERAGE TEACHER STARTING SALARY

\$37,797¹
#49
IN THE NATION

TEACHER PAY GAP

78¢³

MIN. LIVING WAGE

\$63,115⁴

AVERAGE ESP EARNINGS

\$44,516⁵
#25
IN THE NATION

PER STUDENT SPENDING

\$15,329⁶
#27
IN THE NATION

AVERAGE HIGHER ED FACULTY SALARY

\$92,448⁷
#30
IN THE NATION

1. NEA Teacher Salary Benchmark Report, FY 2022-23, April 2024
2. State Rankings, FY 2022-23, NEA Rankings & Estimates Report, April 2024
3. Compared to other college-educated professionals with similar experience. Economic Policy Institute, September 2023
4. Income needed for family of one adult and one child to have a modest but adequate standard of living in the most affordable metro area, 2023 dollars, Economic Policy Institute
5. Average ESP Earnings, FY 2020-21, NEA Research
6. Expenditure per student in fall enrollment. State Rankings, FY 2022-23, NEA Rankings & Estimates Report, April 2024
7. Average Higher Education ESP Earnings, FY 2022-23, NEA Education Support Professional Earnings Report, April 2024

Organizational Specialists: Your Front Line Contacts



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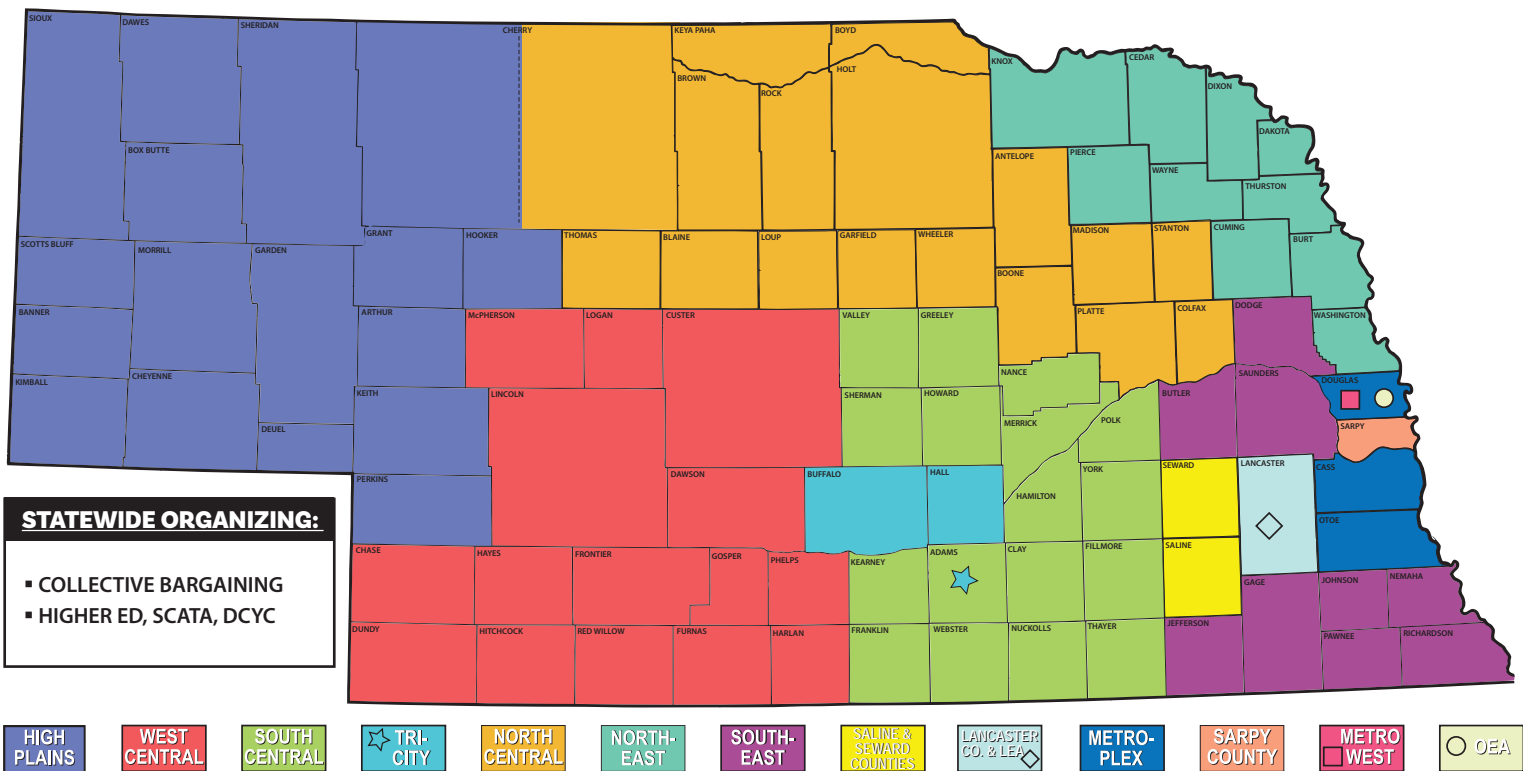
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NSEA field staff are assigned to units as displayed on this color-coded map corresponding with the color displayed below each of their photos. Contact them directly or call NSEA Headquarters at 402-475-7611 or 1-800-742-0047.

UNRIVALED SUPPORT JUST A PHONE CALL AWAY

Organizational specialists are your front-line contacts

Your NSEA Organizational Specialists are dedicated to assisting members across Nebraska—at schools, ESUs and college campuses. They leverage their extensive knowledge and experience to answer your questions and resolve issues on your behalf.

Each organizational specialist is assigned to specific school districts and school buildings. Your organizational specialist knows your district, your building and your administrators. In many cases, they work on your behalf.

These specialists are experienced bargainers who understand contract comparability and who will help you and your colleagues secure competitive salaries and benefits.

Your organizational specialist has advocacy skills, knowledge of Nebraska’s school laws, and the ability to address issues and resolve

disagreements with administrators. NSEA staff members are ready and able to represent educators in grievances and dismissal hearings. They have the knowledge, experience and ability to deal with superintendents, principals and school attorneys.

Your steady and experienced NSEA Organizational Specialist spends many nights on the road, meeting with individual members and local associations, providing training and representing the members they serve. No other organization comes close to providing a service of such magnitude.

The day will come when you have a question about an evaluation, your teaching license or your contract. As a member, you can pick up the phone and call your NSEA Organizational Specialist. They can help answer these and many other questions educators face, including

questions about:

- Plan time and extra duty pay;
- Salary schedule placement;
- Reduction in Force notices; and contract cancellations;
- Evaluation responses;
- Teaching assignments and certificate renewal;
- District policy questions;
- Grievances;
- Personal, sick, family and medical leave; and much more!

Your NSEA Organizational Specialist is easily accessible by phone to guarantee that your calls or texts for assistance are answered quickly. Find the organizational specialist assigned to your region and their contact information on these pages. Members may also call NSEA headquarters at 402-475-7611 or toll-free at 800-742-0047 or send questions through the ‘Contact Us’ feature of the NSEA website at www.nsea.org/contact-us.



TOP 10 REASONS TO BE A MEMBER

Joining the NSEA gives you the power to organize for better working conditions, more student resources and respect for all school staff.

- 01** ▶ **A voice at the table:** Joining the NSEA gives you a voice in decisions that affect your classroom and career. Whether pursuing change, speaking at school board meetings, seeking increased funding, or advocating for education with state elected officials, NSEA supports you and your students.
- 02** ▶ **Increased pay and benefits:** NSEA has worked with our local associations to increase teacher salaries from 45th in the nation in 2001, to 34th in the nation in 2022-23. As a member, you can join in the efforts to promote professional pay, health care and retirement security.
- 03** ▶ **Positive workplace changes:** NSEA works with you, your administration and community organizations to address issues in your school.
- 04** ▶ **NSEA Children's Fund:** As a member, you can access the NSEA Children's Fund to help meet the basic needs of students. From eyeglasses to mittens, the Children's Fund is there to help members help students in need.
- 05** ▶ **Improved working environment & student learning conditions:** NSEA empowers educators to advocate for smaller class size, less standardized testing, updated and improved curriculum, and safe buildings. Improved working conditions mean a better learning environment for students.
- 06** ▶ **Enhanced rights:** A collective bargaining agreement is an enforceable legal document that protects your rights and provides a formal procedure for resolving grievances. NSEA offers you guidance, advice and legal representation.
- 07** ▶ **Professional growth:** Your association provides opportunities for high-quality professional development, networking and collaboration through conferences, webinars and specialized trainings.
- 08** ▶ **Commitment to social & racial justice:** As a member, you join forces with fellow educators to make a difference in the social and racial justice issues that matter most to you and that affect your students' lives. The association works to achieve opportunity for all students and provides training to members.
- 09** ▶ **Liability insurance:** Because the liability potential can be so serious for public education employees, NEA provides all eligible association members with professional liability insurance through the NEA Educators Employment Liability Program.
- 10** ▶ **NEA Member Benefits:** Improve your buying power and save money with NEA's Member Benefits program—offering benefits and discounts for products and services you use every day at www.neamb.com.

Protecting Your Mental Health

EHA Members enjoy 100% in-network coverage for behavioral health office services

It is crucial for public school educators to have healthcare coverage for mental health due to the high-stress nature of their profession, which involves managing classrooms, addressing diverse student needs, and meeting academic standards. Access to mental health services can help prevent burnout and enhance job satisfaction, leading to a more positive and effective learning environment for students. These are just a few of the reasons the Educators Health Alliance (EHA) began covering 100% of BCBSNE's allowable amount for in-network behavioral health office services in 2021. Whether in-person or by using telehealth benefits, educators can find support for their well-being with EHA. (Out-of-network telehealth visits will continue to be non-covered.)

Per IRS regulations, except for preventive health benefits, insurance carriers cannot pay first dollar coverage on HSA-eligible High Deductible Health Plans plans, thus they are still subject to deductible and coinsurance for in-person and telehealth behavioral health office visits. First dollar coverage means insurance pays expenses beginning with the first dollar charged for health care, without copayments or deductibles having to be paid.

The Educators Health Alliance is a non-profit corporation representing the Nebraska Association of School Boards (NASB), the Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA) and the Nebraska State Education Association (NEA). Together, we procure quality, affordable health care insurance for Nebraska education employees and their families. There is strength in unity and, working collaboratively as the EHA, we have been able to be responsive to the requests of educators. Member voices give NEA the best path forward to create an insurance plan that is tailored to the needs of members and their families.

As a member of the Educators Health Alliance, you are part of the largest insurance pool in the State of Nebraska. This statewide pool provides long-term stability and significant bargaining power to negotiate with our health insurance provider. The EHA plan evolved from a statewide health care plan founded by the NEA in the 1960s. NEA remains an influential majority on EHA's board. Six of the 12 voting members on the EHA board are NEA representatives.

**Life Insurance Coverage
FREE with membership**

nea Member Benefits
**WE'VE GOT
YOU COVERED**

One of the most vital benefits of your NSEA membership is the no-cost life insurance available to all members through NEA Member Benefits. Here are details on the plans:

NEA Complimentary Life Insurance

The NEA Complimentary Life Insurance is part of membership at no cost to Active, Reserve and Lifetime NEA members. Eligible members can take advantage of up to \$1,000 in term life insurance and:

- Up to \$5,000 in accidental death/dismemberment coverage;
- Up to \$50,000 in accidental death insurance for covered accidents occurring on the job or while serving as an Association leader; and
- Up to \$150,000 in accidental death benefits for eligible members who are victims of death by homicide while at work.

All members should register a beneficiary at neamb.com/teachers-insurance.

NEA Introductory Term Life Insurance

At no cost, this NEA Introductory Term Life plan is offered to new Association members only:

- For 12 months, eligible new Association members are given complimentary \$15,000 of term life insurance.
- After the complimentary period, members may continue coverage at low, members-only rates.
- No evidence of insurability is required for the first six months.

For details, visit neamb.com/teachers-insurance.

**MORE FACE TIME.
LESS WAIT TIME.**

Your EHA health benefits give you access to virtual visits with doctors and specialists.

So you can get the care you need — wherever you are, whenever you need it.

Visit NebraskaBlue.com/EHAPop to connect with a coach and schedule a screening today.

**BlueCross BlueShield
Nebraska**

Health benefits for EHA are provided by Blue Cross and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.



Take a closer look

Our *insurance and retirement solutions* help educators protect what they have today and prepare for a successful tomorrow.

We think you'll like what you see.

Learn more



Horace Mann Service Corporation and certain of its affiliates (Horace Mann) enter into agreements with educational associations where Horace Mann pays the association to provide services aimed at familiarizing association members with the Horace Mann brand, products or services. For more information, email your inquiry to association.relations@horacemann.com.

 **Horace Mann**
horacemann.com

Management & Program Staff

NSEA is the ONLY association that has advocated for Nebraska public education since 1867.



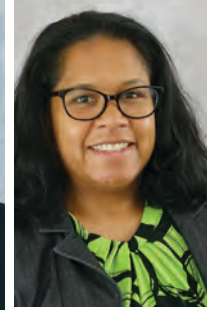
NSEA staff and governance view the solar eclipse on Apr. 8, 2024.

Your NSEA staff is a team of professionals who provide expertise in member rights, advocacy, membership, legislative research, communications, and technology. The support NSEA provides to members every day takes a knowledgeable and adept team with distinct and important skills.

Leading day-to-day work at the NSEA are Executive Director Trish Guinan and Associate Executive Director Isau Metes, in addition to your governance team. Guinan, a 44-year member of the NSEA, taught mathematics at the secondary and college levels. She began her association work as a field representative for members in 1996, becoming Director of Member Rights in 2000, Director of Advocacy in 2012, and was named Executive Director in 2021. Metes most recently served as Director of Advocacy and has worked as program director for teaching and learning and as an organizational specialist. NSEA's program directors and associate staff provide expertise in all areas vital to promoting the cause of public education, the education profession and support for Nebraska students and teachers.



Trish Guinan
Executive Director,
28 years



Isau Metes
Associate Executive Director,
5 years



Jennifer Rieken
Director of Business Services,
2 months



Michaela Habe
Director of Accounting,
3 months



Patty Schroer
Asst. to Associate Executive Director,
33 years



Martha Livingston
Assistant to President,
7 years



Nicole Jacobsen
Receptionist, Assist. to Exec. Director,
3 years



Karen Kilgarin
Dir. Public Affairs, Communications,
30 years



Kristi Capek
Visual Comms & Digital Engagement,
24 years



Kelsey Foley
Multimedia Comms Specialist,
6 years



Tim Lassen
Dir. of Information Technology,
2 years



Jason Wiese
Director of Advocacy,
3 years



Saoirse Langlois
Advocacy Associate,
3 years



Jason Hayes
Dir. Public Policy & Leg. Research,
12 years



Brian Mikkelsen
Director, Political Field Operations,
27 years



Eamonn Leahy
Govt. Relations, Political Field Ops Assoc.,
1 month



Teresa Greve
Membership, Data Analyst Assoc.,
15 years



Karen Hunt
Accounting, Membership Assoc.,
18 years



REPRESENTATION FOR ALL IN EDUCATION

Members lead the way statewide

The NSEA includes six membership groups that support and enhance the Association’s mission. These groups provide essential perspectives on policy decisions and contribute to the profession’s stability. NSEA is fully member-driven, with members guiding the organization’s direction, selecting issues, and electing local representatives. Members also have numerous leadership and involvement opportunities. See below for details on each membership group.

Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee

For more than 40 years, the Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee has represented minority members on the NSEA Board of Directors. EMAC promotes respect and understanding of minority groups and seeks to maintain compliance with NEA and NSEA goals for increased minority participation, training and leadership.

The EMAC Executive Committee consists of officers and two representatives each from these groups: Black,

Hispanic, American Indian/Alaska Native; and Asian/Pacific Islander. All members, regardless of ethnicity, are eligible for EMAC membership and may attend committee meetings. If interested, reach EMAC Chair Nora Lenz at lenzna@gmail.com. The 2024-25 officers are:

- Chair..... Nora Lenz, Lincoln
- Vice Chair Christina Ellison, Omaha
- Secretary Tanishia Jacobs, Bellevue
- American Indian/Alaska Native Audel Salazar, Omaha
- American Indian/Alaska Native Calvin Krogman, Santee
- Asian/Pacific Islander..... Natalie Yosten, Lincoln
- Asian/Pacific Islander..... Sidd Thomas, Lincoln
- Black..... Brittney Hodges-Bolkovac, Westside
- Black..... Noelle Nielsen, Omaha
- Hispanic Paula Aguirre, Omaha
- Hispanic Nicole Lopez-Bettendorf, Lincoln
- NSEA Staff Liaison..... Megan Lyons
- NSEA Staff Liaison..... Mandy Faripour
- NSEA Associate Staff..... Chris Garcia

Higher Education Affairs Committee

Since 2006, the NSEA Higher Education Affairs Committee has facilitated communication between NSEA higher education associations and members; supporting and promoting NSEA in a comprehensive and unified way, and developing outreach and recruitment efforts for higher education faculty, academic professionals and higher ed educational support professionals across Nebraska. The 2024-25 officers are:

- Chair..... Kristi Rastede, Northeast CC
- Vice Chair Andrew Lenzen, Western Neb. CC
- NSEA Staff Liaison..... Mandy Faripour
- NSEA Associate Staff..... Noah Snurr

NSEA-Retired

The nearly 5,900 members of NSEA-Retired have answered every call when your Association needs an extra voice to make phone calls, talk to legislators or pen



EMAC: (Left to right) EMAC Chair Nora Lenz and Vice-Chair Christina Running Hawk Ellison



NSEA-Retired: (Left to right) Janice Barnaso, Pat Etherton, Maureen Nickels, Rita Bennett, Arlene Rea and Pat Sheri Paden.

letters to the editor. They assist with many tasks at NSEA Headquarters, and reliably attend NSEA-Retirees’ fall and spring conferences.

Founded in 1985, NSEA-Retired has been instrumental in lobbying the Nebraska Legislature. The continual reduction of state income tax rates – and now the phasing out of those taxes – on Social Security income in Nebraska is a direct result of the work of NSEA-Retired members.

Membership is open to members 45 or older who are eligible to receive benefits under a school-employee retirement plan in Nebraska. Membership is also open to members 45+ from another state if they were employed for at least 5 years in a position that qualified them or for active membership but are no longer so employed. Active members who are not yet 45, or who may not yet qualify for school-employee retirement benefits, may join as “pre-retired.”

For details, call NSEA at 1-800-742-0047. Lifetime or Pre-Retired Lifetime dues are \$500 (an additional \$100 for Omaha and Lincoln Pre-Retired Lifetime). Annual dues are \$60. ESP Pre-Retired and ESP Lifetime are \$300; ESP annual dues are \$46. Lincoln and Omaha have additional local dues. The NSEA-Retired officers for 2024-25 are:

- President.....John Heineman, Lincoln
- Vice PresidentRoger Rea, Omaha
- Secretary Dr. Sarah Brown, Omaha
- Treasurer..... Arlene Rea, Lincoln
- Capitol DistrictPatsy Koch Johns, Lincoln
- Capitol District..... Dr. Margie Nowak, Lincoln
- Metro District..... Walta Sue Dodd, Omaha
- Metro District..... Carol Kreji, Omaha
- Elkhorn District..... Dan Schiefelbein
- Sandhills District Howard Gaffney
- Panhandle District Joy Brown, Hyannis
- Tri-Valley DistrictJan Barnason, Hastings
- NSEA Staff Liaison..... Kristen Sedlacek
- NSEA Staff Liaison..... Matt Pittman
- NSEA Staff Liaison.....Andrea Longoria
- NSEA Associate Staff.....Samantha Vrbka

Education Support Professionals Committee

The ESP Committee represents paraprofessionals, sign language interpreters, secretaries, bus drivers, cafeteria workers and other non-certificated education employees. The committee seeks to improve the standing of those school employees and works to improve membership and

opportunities for these employees through the NSEA Board and statewide conferences. The committee chairs for 2024-25 are:

- Chair..... Jenny Wood, South Sioux City
- Vice Chair Vacant
- NSEA Staff Liaison.....Judy Roach
- NSEA Staff Liaison.....Andrea Longoria
- NSEA Staff Liaison..... Patrick Fielder
- NSEA Associate Staff.....Angie Tasich

NSEA Aspiring Educators

Members of NSEA’s student affiliate have been busy. Formerly the Student Education Association of Nebraska, the organization recently changed its name to NSEA – Aspiring Educators. The name now aligns with the National Education Association student program, which adopted Aspiring Educators several years ago.

The mission for the organization’s nearly 1,100 members is unchanged. Through Aspiring Educators, teachers-to-be receive resources, training and an understanding of NSEA support and benefits. They receive liability insurance while student teaching, plus many of the same benefits active members receive.

Along with local chapter meetings at 16 Nebraska colleges and universities, yearly highlights are the fall and spring conferences, a Delegate Assembly modeled after the NSEA Delegate Assembly, and the NEA Aspiring Educators conference.

Combined state and NEA annual dues are \$40. In their first year of teaching, past members may apply for a full rebate for every year of dues. The 2024-25 officers are:

- President.....Jillian Buzzard, Wayne
- Vice President Kathryn Koehler, UNL
- Secretary Winona Mitchell, UNL
- Underclass Representative..... Vacant
- Metro..... Vacant
- Northeast Region.....Alyssa Denman, Midland
- Southeast Region Vacant
- Western Region Natalie Bentjen, UNK
- NSEA Staff Liaison..... Kim Story
- NSEA Staff Liaison..... Andy Isaacson
- NSEA Staff Liaison..... Teresa Matthews
- NSEA Associate Staff..... Noah Snurr

New Generation of Educators in Nebraska

NSEA’s NewGEN organization represents the New Generation of Educators in Nebraska. The group is comprised of early career educators who are in their first seven years of teaching. NewGEN believes in the power of uniting and supporting early career educators through Association membership and engagement. Its mission is to drive early career educators toward success through professional development and mentoring opportunities.

NewGEN focuses on creating a network of educators who are facing the same challenges and providing resources and connections to help them find solutions for time management, stress, lesson planning, classroom management, teacher-parent interaction and honing their teaching skills.

For more information or to participate in NewGEN, contact NSEA headquarters at (402) 475-7611.

Nebraska Wesleyan University

Costume
Library

- > Vintage and period costumes
- > Props and furniture
- > School and non-profit discount

Bring your show to life with the

MIDWEST'S LARGEST COSTUME COLLECTION.

Make your appointment today:

NWU Theatre Costume Library
Lincoln, Nebraska
402.465.2390
costumelibrary@nebrwesleyan.edu

NWU 2024-25
THEATRE
SEASON



PERSONAL EMAIL ACCOUNT A MUST

In the busy life of an educator, using one email account is convenient. However, it might compromise your personal protection. Think twice before using your school email for casual conversations, and here's why.

Subject to review

Your school email is district property, so the district can review it without your permission. Parents might also access your emails via open records requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

Association business must be kept separate. Let's say you're involved in a dispute with an administrator (something NSEA experts can help with). You wouldn't want that administrator to have access to your association emails on your school-issued email account. That could hurt you in the long run during a hearing.

Don't save personal documents on your work computer, as they are subject to the same access as an email account. Anyone from the school district can view them at any time. The district owns any district-issued technology such as laptops or tablets for use in the classroom, for coaching, or for any other school-related purpose.

Email and technology use isn't limited to work hours. The district owns the property and monitors your activity 24/7, whether you're on or off the clock.

Your personal email, cell phone, and computer are not district property, so the district needs your permission to access them. Always use personal devices for association business or social media, not school-issued ones.

Finally, depending on your school board policy, negotiated agreement and/or staff handbook, the use of personal communication and personal devices may be restricted to

outside the contract day, so only use your personal devices when you're off the clock.

School email accounts

Even before you begin typing a message on your school computer or email account, consider your motives and all possible outcomes.

- Are you saying anything disparaging about students, colleagues, administration or the school board? If so, use your personal email on a personal device, and do it on your own time, not during the school day.

- Make sure you are sending your personal message to the recipient's personal email, as well, especially if they are a work colleague or fellow association member.

- Are you saying something political? Refrain from sending anything promoting or disparaging about ballot measures or political candidates.

- Are you saying anything you would want to be private? Be aware that at any time someone can review and read all communications from your school email.

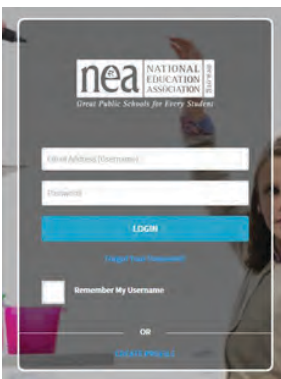
NSEA encourages all members to create a personal email account through a non-school platform, such as Gmail or Hotmail, to conduct personal and association business.

Visit NEA 360

If you're a new member or if it's been awhile since you last logged in, take a moment to update your information on the MyNEA360 portal.

Go to myNEA360.org and use the instructions below to create or update your profile.

UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION



- Go to www.myNEA360.org
- Click **CREATE PROFILE** (if you are new to edCommunities) or
- **LOGIN** (if you already have an edCommunities profile)

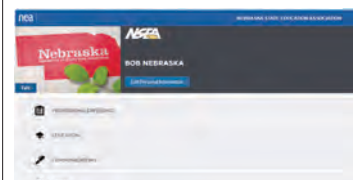


- Enter your information
 - Click **REGISTER FOR ACCESS**
- Skip this step if you have already created an edCommunities profile.*



- A verification message will be sent to your email.

- Click **MyNEA360 Profile**



- Click Edit Personal Information to access your personal data
- Ability to review and update your own record as necessary.
- Quick links to resources
- Help Desk - Get answers on your time.

If you experience technical difficulties with the myNEA360 website, you can send your updated information by email to membership@nsea.org or call NSEA at (800) 742-0047.



THE CADRE LEAVES A FOREVER MARK ON STUDENTS. (SOME IN CADRE 45 GOT MATCHING TATTOOS!)

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Turn to the NSEA Children's Fund



Since the first few donated dollars trickled into the NSEA Children's Fund coffers in 1994, dollars have been exiting the fund to assist children in need. That is the founding principle of the Children's Fund: to help children.

Donations to the Children's Fund have provided hundreds of thousands of dollars to help children in need. It has helped to pay for glasses, clothing, medical and dental needs of children; provide assistance to a family whose home and belongings were destroyed by fire; and more.

There is never any red tape or lengthy delay for members wanting to use the fund to help a students. A call to Karen Hunt at the NSEA (800-742-0047) is usually all that is needed. For more information, visit nsea.org/childrensfund.

REMINDER! Check Your Paycheck.



Employees and employers both have a responsibility to confirm their paychecks are correct.

It's not a common problem, but it is an issue for which members have turned to NSEA for help. Sometimes it's a clerical error that causes an overpayment or underpayment of

salary to a school employee. When it happens, it can cause economic hardship for a teacher or school employee. Reparations in such instances may have to be decided on a case-by-case basis.

Local associations should remind or help members to review their first paycheck of each school year for accuracy. It is recommended that each local assist its members, and new members in particular, with the computations to determine whether that first check of the year is correct. Many of these problems could be avoided with such a service.

If a discrepancy is discovered, members should notify NSEA immediately. Each month the issue goes unresolved adds to the amount the member will have to repay – or to the income lost if the member is being underpaid. The matter is further complicated when considering tax and retirement implications.

If you find a paycheck discrepancy, contact your NSEA Organizational Specialist at 1-800-742-0047.



SCHOOL EMPLOYEE FILE CHECKLIST

Every school employee should keep the following documents on hand:

- Profession-related certificates and licenses
- Current Negotiated Agreement
- Copies of all evaluations, with signatures
- Transcripts of higher education credits and degrees
- Letters of appointment or hire
- Employee contracts, including supplemental pay
- Yearly salary notice supplied by employer
- Record of accumulated sick leave
- Personal record of use of sick and personal leave days
- Yearly retirement statements
- Documentation of commendations, awards and honors
- Record of non-college job-related seminars, workshops and conferences
- Record of disciplinary techniques and methods used in handling student problems (note date and witnesses involved)
- Record of employment-related incidents
- Yearly school calendar
- Phone numbers for your NSEA Organizational Specialist and local association president
- Association/Building Representative contact information



Always keep a hardcopy or digital folder with these documents at home. In case of an employment-related problem, you may need some of these records at a moment's notice without access to your worksite.

THE DURHAM MUSEUM

Teachers' Night: Oct. 4, 2024



The Durham Museum in Omaha is set to host its highly anticipated annual Teachers' Night on October 4. This special event invites educators to engage in a resource fair designed to support and enrich their teaching experience. During the evening, representatives from various regional cultural and educational institutions will be on hand, offering a wealth of free classroom-ready materials. They will also provide information about field trips and educational programs available in their respective areas. NSEA proudly sponsors this event.

Teachers will have the opportunity to enjoy a range of complimentary food and prizes while exploring the museum's exhibits. This evening is offered free of charge to educators across all grade levels and subjects. For additional details and to register for the event, please visit the museum's website at durhammuseum.org/teachers-week.



Everything You Need to Know to Vote Early

From your local school board to the state legislature, the decisions made by elected officials and their appointees shape every aspect of your work with students. NSEA stands alone in Nebraska as the sole education organization with the commitment and expertise to champion your salary and benefits with determination. Unlike so-called "alternative" groups that claim to "stay out of politics," NSEA recognizes that advocating for smaller class sizes, higher salaries, enhanced benefits, and quality, affordable health insurance is inherently political. These vital improvements are directly influenced by the actions of your elected officials including your local school board, your state senators, the governor, the president of the United States and their appointee to the U.S. Department of Education.

Nebraska is a no-excuse state, meaning any registered voter may request an early-voting ballot. Voters are not required to provide a reason.

You can print an online early-voting application, complete the form, and then mail, fax or scan/take a picture of your application and email it to your

November
5

county election office. The last day for an early-voting application to be received is 6 p.m. on October 25, 2024.

In 2023, Nebraska established voter identification requirements

for elections in Nebraska. When voting early you'll need to write your driver's license or state ID number on the ballot return envelope or enclose a photocopy of acceptable form of ID. Acceptable IDs must have your name and photo. Valid photo IDs include:

- Nebraska driver's license/state ID
- U.S. passport
- Military ID
- Tribal ID
- Hospital, assisted-living facility, or nursing home record
- Nebraska political subdivision ID (state, county, city, school, etc.)
- Nebraska college or university ID
- Expired documents will be accepted. You can get a free state ID for voting from the DMV.

Find more information at www.sos.nebraska.gov/elections/voter-id

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ENJOY WHAT MATTERS MOST.

Association membership means less worrying for you and more action from us. With representation at the bargaining table, liability insurance and so much more, NSEA provides advice and professional advocacy on the range of issues you face as an educator: salary, working conditions, evaluation support, contract compliance and enforcement, and retirement.



REACH, TEACH AND INSPIRE.

You're never on your own. Your membership gives you access to education's most sought-after authorities who provide innovative programs you can use in your classroom. With resources that cover classroom management and supports, to more in-depth professional development provided by your local, state, and national affiliates—you have a team supporting you.




MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD.

As trusted professionals, educators are best equipped to make school and classroom decisions to ensure student success. It's our mission to ensure educators have a seat at the table when education policies are made. As members of the Association, educators have a powerful voice in creating the policies that affect our students, our schools, and our classrooms.



GROW YOUR NETWORK.



We're a community of experienced professionals. Through a variety of online and off-line tools, you enjoy access to valuable resources on classroom management, lesson planning, and a host of other topics. Plus, you'll make connections with the educators at your school, in your state, and among our more than 3 million members nationwide.