



NEA Directors' Report to the WEAC Representative Assembly – April 2022



Wisconsin's NEA Directors

Nick Sirek
715-205-9552
sirekn@weac.org

Jesse Martinez
651-245-7315
martinezj@weac.org

Mike Glabere, At-Large ESP
414-469-7359
mglabere@aol.com

Ron "Duff" Martin, Exec. Committee
715-379-5583
rmartin@nea.org

Kirah Zeilinger, Alternate Director
608-921-3626
zeilingerk@weac.org

Women's Observance – The NEA Board of Directors welcomed Sindy Marisol Benavides, the youngest and only female CEO of the League of United Latin American Citizens. She is a lifelong advocate and Honduran American. She expressed thanks for what we as NEA members do every day for our children. Education is a cornerstone of LULAC and there is a history of firsts including ending segregation in California and creating the model preschool for Spanish speaking students that was used to form Head Start. She stressed the need for economic and social systems that work for everyone and has created One Million Latinas Strong (to register and turnout voters) and CEO Circle of Latina Leaders to encourage leadership. Close to 20% of Americans are Latino, and more Latinos are going into education than ever before. (KZ)

Black Observance - We welcomed Dr. Bettina Love. She is a social and racial justice leader and has written books such as We Want to do More than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Education Freedom. She showed love for NEA members and its leaders taking on the word. She reminded us that Ruby Bridges is only 67 years old, and segregation is not that old. Racism is a pre-existing that is found everywhere. Black and Hispanic students that go to HCBU or Hispanic Education institutions pay more for their student loans than those that go to another education institution. She stressed that we need to get to the root of oppression and make schools better for all children. We need to be co-conspirators, not just allies. Dr. Love shared this [video](#) as a reminder of black history makers. (KZ)

Report of the President – Majority of updates were left to the executive directors' report. Reported on aspects of travel around the country meeting with members. Specific emphasis on ESP and the work they have done in pandemic. Discussion addressing harm done by BLM poster distribution mistake in last months NEA magazine. Small group breakouts to discuss where ppl were at and moving forward. Reminder on damage that can be done on social media, check in before assuming. Asked membership, and board to help her. Talked about the work of Dr. Shawn Ginwright and a Healing Centered Approach. (MG)

Report of the Vice President – New Mexico trip and the Art build, positive role of art in our actions. Think tanks are up and running, be patient the process is part of the journey in making them productive. We are early in our journey. Update on assessment and accountability work, task force has a visioning document completed, work now is to move and create the future we have outlined in it. Hannah Vandering added information on the timeline to implement the charges outlined in the vision. The work now is to move from the here and now to what is next. National conferences update we are steadily monitoring Covid statistics and plan I for conferences going forward to be in person with a virtual option. Leadership is asked to do rumor control by verifying information before spreading it. Covid protocols are science based and enforced. Last discussion was of our work on securing the environment, example of how bad the new governor in Virginia is, and how our collective responses are slowing down the damage. (MG)

Report of the Secretary-Treasurer – The Board received an update from Secretary-Treasurer Noel Candalaria.

- NEA received an unmodified (clean) opinion in the 2020-2021 audit.
- Membership numbers are down about 170,000 over the last 10 years. Since 2020 NEA is down about 75,000 because of pandemic and the Janus decision.
- The NEA Budget Committee is continuing to engage individual members and constituency groups. The 2022-2024 budget will be presented to the Board in May. The pre-RA Budget Hearing will be held virtually in June.
- Year-Round Organizing work continues – 40 states have paid member organizers; Wisconsin has 75. In 2021 there have been union wins in every state! Check out [NEA.org/win](https://www.nea.org/win) for more information.
- The Board acted on the 2022-2023 member dues. Teacher and ESP salaries continue to trend up but have plateaued a bit. Active teacher dues will increase \$2 to \$204 and active ESP dues will increase \$1 to \$122.50. All other dues will remain flat – retired annual-\$35, retired lifetime-\$300, aspiring ed-\$15. (NS)

Report of the Executive Director – Executive Director, Kim Anderson, addressed the board to update members on how NEA has been advancing all of its strategic objectives. Below are the main highlights of her report:

- There is continued election work happening during every single cycle. The Battleground Summer program will be ramped up for the midterm elections due to its success in places like Wisconsin during the 2020 election.
- The American Rescue Plan has brought unprecedented support to public education from the federal government. NEA is setting up an implementation network where states can receive support from the national association on implementing ARP. This money must be implemented with educator voice!
- There is ongoing micro-credentials, social media advocacy, and professional development offered around NEA's social and racial justice work. These opportunities can be found on [nea.org](https://www.nea.org) (JM)

Report of General Counsel – Alice O'Brien, NEA's General Counsel, addressed the board to talk about the state of the attacks on public education, the voucher system, and the federal judiciary.

There are continued and sustained attacks on public education across the country. From "Anti-Honesty in Education" legislation, to "Anti-Trans" legislation, to "Pro-Voucher" legislation, our opponents continue to attempt to undermine our public education system. NEA continues to fight back against these attacks and have experienced several success as outlined below:

- In Arizona and Iowa, NEA and state affiliates have successfully either defeated or narrowed "Anti-Honesty" legislation.
- In New Hampshire, a court decision handed down stated that just because education makes you uncomfortable doesn't mean that it is illegal.
- NEA is supporting state and local affiliates who fight against anti trans bills and legislation and has submitted an Amicus Brief in regard to Anti-Trans legislation.

Ms. O'Brien also highlighted the affect President Trump had on the courts. The lack of diversity is due to the amount of straight, white, unqualified men nominated to the federal bench by the former President. This lack of representation has immediate impacts on populations of color as white judges are much more likely to hand out harsher sentences for nonviolent crimes to people of color than judges of color. However, NEA sees hope with the Biden administration:

- In the first year of his presidency, President Biden nominated more judges than any other president in recent history to the courts.
- President Biden's nominees have been more diverse than most other presidents in recent history.
- President Biden will have the chance in early 2022 to nominate and confirm the first Black woman to the US Supreme Court. (JM)

NEA RA 2022 – NEA Leadership continues to prepare for and plan the 2022 NEA Representative Assembly in Chicago, Ill. The RA will be held in-person at McCormick Place and will also offer an online option. NEA Staff are working with the same vendors as previous years to host both in-person and online. NEA will also assist State and special interest Caucuses to hold hybrid meetings. The theme of the RA is “Joy. Justice. Excellence. The Strength of Educators. The Brilliance of Students. The Power of Community.” All pre-RA hearings will be held online while pre-RA conferences will be hybrid.

- Amendments to the Constitution, Bylaws, and Standing Rules – there are currently four proposed amendments but the deadline to submit amendments is mid-March. The Board of Directors has taken a position of opposition to the currently proposed amendments.
- The Board adopted the Standing Rules for the 2022 RA which reflect changes to accommodate the hybrid nature of the RA.
- These materials will be posted to the RA website soon. (NS)