

OEA Children's Action Fund (CAF) Activities

Through the OEA political action arm, the OEA Children's Action Fund, association members interview candidates about their views on education-related issues, issue recommendations on which candidates are most supportive of public education, and work to help get pro-education candidates elected.

The CAF Board will be holding elections for 2 vacant seats. Anyone who has contributed to CAF through payroll deduction for at least 2 years can be nominated. If you are interested in serving on the CAF board (which meets 4 or 5 times a year), please contact CAF Chairperson Kathy Lorentz at 981-3185. Nominations will be open until Sept. 22nd; all CAF members will be allowed to vote.

At their August 28th Board meeting The CAF Board voted to contribute to the following OEA recommended candidates:

OPS School Board

- District #2, Freddie Gray
- District #4, Nancy Huston and Greg Mahloch
- District #8, Molly Hunt-Spissak
- District #10, Kersten Borer
- District #12, Sandy Jensen

Legislature

- District 3, Gail Kopplin
- District 5, Heath Mello
- District 7, Jeremy Nordquist
- District 9, Gwen Howard
- District 11, Brenda Council
- District 13, Tonya Cook

State Board of Education

Rebecca Valdez

Meet the OEA Staff

Continued from page 1.

Marj Stolle: handles all aspects of maintaining membership records. If you have a change of address or phone number, Marj is the person you will want to contact. Any questions about dues will go directly to her. Any changes in building staff rosters should be forwarded to Marj.

Brian Eilderts: makes sure that everyone gets their OEA mail. Brian also does all of our printing at the OEA, such as *Tip-Off* and *The News*.

Tim Krapp: is a UniServ Director (delivering the unified services of the OEA, NSEA, and NEA). Tim is here to assist members, whether it be interpretation of the master agreement or accompanying a member called to Human Resources, just to name a few of the things for which you can contact Tim.

Dennis Gehringer: Executive Director and UniServ. Dennis is responsible for the direction of the OEA staff, in addition to his UniServ duties.


Calling the OEA

Don't be surprised if we ask you a few questions when you call. We want to help you determine the nature of your

need to ensure that you will be speaking to the staff member best equipped to handle your questions. If the individual best equipped to handle your concerns is not available, please leave a message about the nature of your concern, the best time to get in touch with you, a phone number (including home or cell phone) and an email where we can reach you. You can request to use staff voice mail if your concern is confidential.

OEA members ALWAYS have the right to OEA representation when called to a meeting to discuss job performance. This could be with your building principal, a supervisor, or a meeting at Human Resources. When requested to meet inform the individual that you would like an OEA representative to be present and call OEA to schedule the time and date.

If you have a concern regarding membership services (timeliness of a response or your quality of representation) you should contact OEA President Maddie Fennell at 346-0400.



WHEN & WHERE

September 18
Member Benefits Committee

Metro District Board
5:00 p.m.

September 25
Compensation & Benefits
PACE

**All meetings begin at 4:15 p.m.
@ OEA unless otherwise noted.**

OEA Tip-Off

The OEA *Tip-Off* is a bi-monthly publication printed for members of the Omaha Education Association.

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Visit us on the web at:
www.omahaoea.org



OEA *Tip-Off*

September 12, 2008

I CAN DO IT!

It doesn't matter if you have taught one year or 31 years, we all can use more strategies on working effectively with our students. "I Can Do It" is a nationally recognized and highly engaging workshop conducted by your OEA colleagues that is designed to help teachers manage their classrooms effectively.

Topics covered include:

- Ways to get to know your students
- Establishing and reinforcing effective rules and routines
- Creating smoothly flowing classrooms, using effective hints and sponges
- Communicating effectively with students and their parents
- Working with students who exhibit difficult behaviors



Last year's participants raved about the experience:

"You guys were awesome!"; "Great job! Excellent Ideas!"; "I wish I had taken this earlier!"; "It was great to talk with so many other teachers and learn their ideas!"

If you are interested in registering for one of the workshops below, please email Diana Casey at diana.casey@ops.org. You can take the workshops in any order that works for you! All workshops will be held at the OEA.

I Can Do It Part One: "Mastering the Fundamentals and Putting It All Together"

Saturday, Sept. 27th, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For Elementary and Secondary teachers. Lunch and breakfast will be provided
Saturday, November 8th, 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For Elementary and Secondary teachers. Lunch and breakfast will be provided

I Can Do It Part Two: "Using Instruction to Keep Students Engaged"

Tuesday, Sept. 30th, 3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., Secondary only, dinner provided.
Wednesday, Oct. 15th, 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., Elementary only, dinner provided.

Meet the OEA Staff

In order for you to have your questions answered in the timeliest manner, let us introduce the staff and tell you what they do:

Lorrie Stuto: is the Receptionist and can handle calls about AR Assembly, committee meetings and minutes and events such as Laurels Night. She also provides secretarial support to the President, Executive Director, and UniServ Director. Any changes in your AR's or Alternates can be e-mailed to Lorrie at lorrie.stuto@nsea.org

Mary Freel: is our Business Services Director and Administrative Assistant to the Executive Director and the OEA Board of Directors. Mary is also responsible for the annual OEA General Election, Bylaw amendment elections, and contract ratification elections. She also assists leaders and staff in their travels to conferences, including the NEA Representative Assembly.

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**Every Decision in Education
Is a Political Decision!**

OEA Political Action! Get Involved Now!!



**To receive political updates and
volunteer information, register at:**


<http://omahaoea.org>



If you have not received your OEA desktop calendar please contact Brian Eilderts
brian.eilderts@nsea.org
346-0400




OEA MEMBERS
YMCA Membership Opportunity
Omaha/Council Bluffs/Valley YMCA's Only
August 13 - September 13, 2008
 Join the YMCA without paying a Joining Fee - \$75.00 Savings!
 For more information please contact Chris at the YMCA, 977-4316



I'VE BEEN CALLED TO HR!?!

WHAT DO I DO NOW?

When you are told to report to Human Resources do you have to go? **YES!**
 Do you have to go alone? **NO!**



Called to HR? It can and does happen. Don't go without the OEA. If you are an **OEA member**, you have the right to have an OEA staff member attend the meeting with you. If you cannot immediately arrange for an OEA staff member to attend, you should call HR and inform them that you have contacted OEA and are awaiting a return call and that you will report to HR immediately upon talking to OEA.

You have the right to representation in any job or performance-related meetings. Whenever you are called to Human Resources we urge you to contact OEA before you report.

DO I HAVE TO ATTEND A MEETING CALLED BY MY PRINCIPAL?

When you are told to meet with your principal or direct supervisor do you have to go? **YES!**
 Do you have to go alone? **NO!**

You have the right to representation in any job performance-related meetings. Is it always necessary for OEA to be there with you? Maybe not, but call us at **346-0400** and we can help you decide.

Q: What if my principal/supervisor says I cannot have the OEA present?
 A: This is **FALSE**. You **ALWAYS** have the right to have an OEA staff member of your choice present when called into a meeting regarding your job performance. **ALWAYS!**

Q: What if I am in a meeting and I request to stop the meeting until an OEA representative can be called and my principal/supervisor refuses to allow this?
 A: **DO NOT** accept their answer.

Principals/supervisors do not have the authority to deny you OEA representation.

Q: So what do I do?
 A: You politely and professionally inform them that you are requesting that this meeting be stopped until you can have an OEA staff member of your choice in attendance. After you politely and professionally say this a third time politely excuse yourself and **call OEA immediately 346-0400.**

NEA Complimentary Life InsuranceSM (formerly known as NEA DUES-TAB)

All eligible members can take advantage of the valuable, automatic term life insurance coverage provided by NEA Complimentary Life Insurance^{SM*}. All you have to do is register your beneficiary and you're covered so don't wait, do it now!

- A guaranteed benefit
- Provided at no cost to Active, Staff, Reserve and Life members
- Up to \$1,000 of term life insurance
- Up to \$5,000 of accidental death and dismemberment coverage
- Up to \$50,000 of AD&D insurance for any covered accident that occurs while on the job or serving as an Association Leader
- Up to \$150,000 of life insurance for unlawful homicide while on the job

Your coverage is automatic but you must register your beneficiary at <http://www.neamb.com/insurance/linall.jsp>.

Last year we lost two OEA members and the financial burden on their families was reduced when they received a life insurance payment from NEA. However, one of the members had not updated their beneficiary! Please go to the website NOW so you can make sure your benefit goes to your designee.

How to Read Your Paycheck

by Lance Purdy

So, you've received your September paycheck, how do you know it is correct?

1) Check the top row of your paycheck statement. Is your information correct? Address, Employee ID, Tax Data.

2) Check the pay rate. This is monthly. Multiply this amount by 12. This is your yearly gross salary.

Compare this amount to the amounts listed in the salary schedules available in the OEA folder on First Class. Find your dollar amount in the Salary Schedule. Note the appropriate column and see how many years of service it corresponds to. This is years of service prior to the current school year. The steps on the salary schedule do not correspond to the number of years of experience. If your salary matches the salary amount listed in the row with your number of years of experience (prior to 2008-09) and the column is correct (education level) then all is good.

3) What if I have a Long Service Increment?

If you qualify for a Long Service Increment (LSI), that amount is also included in the pay rate, subtract any LSI's you are receiving (see table below for LSI amounts) to determine your yearly gross salary.

Current Long Service Increment Values			
15 Year Plan	2007-09	20 Year Plan	2007-09
1LSI(after 15 yrs)	897	1LSI(after 20 yrs)	1,495
2LSI(after 20 yrs)	1,794	2LSI(after 25 yrs)	2,990
3LSI(after 25 yrs)	2,691	3LSI(after 30 yrs)	4,485
4LSI(after 30 yrs)	3,588		

For example, a teacher who is starting their 18th year in OPS at a Master's Level would have a monthly gross salary of \$4,212.

$$4,212 \times 12 = \$50,544 \text{ minus LSI } (\$897) = \$49,647$$

On the salary schedule \$49,647 is the amount on Step 11.

4) Before-Tax Deductions. Is your *Flex Plan 125* listed. This is also where your *Pension Contribution* is listed. This is the amount of money you are contributing to Omaha School Employees Retirement System. Also listed here are

any additional *Deductions* before taxes (like a 403b). You want a lot of your deductions here, because these are *before tax*, so in essence, the government is helping you pay for these expenses (anywhere from 10 to 25 cents on the dollar – depending on your tax rate)

5) After-Tax Deductions. This is where you will see your OEA dues. Remember, "OEA" includes the dues for both NSEA (the state organization), NEA (the national organization), any political contributions or other voluntary contributions made through OEA. If you itemize, you can deduct union dues on your tax return.

6) Employer Paid Benefits. These are all the additional benefits (and their costs) that OPS pays: basic life insurance, long term disability, pension contribution, etc.

7) Sick Days. You'll want to compare this to your August pay stub to see that you have had at least 10 days added to your balance. If you have had some personal days roll over into sick days, they should be included here, too. Remember, after you accumulate 90 sick days, things get a little different.

8) Personal Days. You'll want to check that you have had two days added to your balance. Remember, if you can refrain from taking these days, they will roll over into your sick days balance at the end of the year.

If you have any questions regarding placement on the salary schedule (years of service, degree or long service increment), you should first contact Human Resources at 557-2300.

If you have questions regarding leave (sick, personal, bereavement) you should first talk with the time reporter in your building. Leave questions that can't be resolved at the building, as well as questions regarding deductions or employer benefits, should be directed to Compensation and Benefits at 557-2110.

If you are still having trouble finding answers to your questions, call OEA (yet another reason to belong!).