



WHEN & WHERE

November 27 & 28
School closed
Happy Thanksgiving!

December 3
OEA-R Retirement Seminar
4:15 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

December 4
EMAC
Compensation & Benefits

December 9
AR Assembly - 4:15 p.m.
Wilson Middle School

December 10
Instructional Advocacy

December 12
OEA Holiday Open House

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

Goin' to Kansas City...

We still have a few seats left on the bus headed to Oak Park Mall in Overland Park, Kansas and the Kansas City Plaza on Saturday, December 6th. The cost is \$27.00 per person; payment must be made with reservation.

If you would like to reserve a seat, please contact Lorrie Stuto at 346-0400 or lorrie.stuto@nsea.org

**Omaha Education Association
Apparel-2008**



The Omaha Education Association is offering an opportunity for members to order OEA embroidered apparel at a reduced price. Great to wear on casual Fridays or at community parades!



All orders are due to Susan Kalina at South High on Wednesday, November 26th

Visit www.omahaoea.org to see all the styles that are available and for ordering information.

OEA Tip-Off

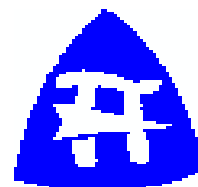
The OEA *Tip-Off* is a bi-monthly publication printed for members of the Omaha Education Association.

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



OEA

Tip-Off

November 21, 2008

Read Across America!

2009 will be the National Education Association's twelfth annual observance of Read Across America.



NEA is calling all of America's children, both young and old, to celebrate the joys of reading with Dr. Seuss on his 105th birthday.

Our reading party for the Omaha Public Schools will take place on Monday, March 2, 2009.

We need volunteers to help us plan our celebration and we need names of community members who will come to school and read to our students.

If you want to volunteer, or if you would like to share the name of a potential reader, please contact Rose Pope at rose.pope@ops.org.

LEARNING ABOUT THE APPRAISAL PROCESS

This November, we had a first in OEA history! An Association Representative (AR) from each building was invited by OPS to join their principal at the Principals Meeting to learn about the OPS Teacher Appraisal System. The hour-long workshop offered principals and ARs the opportunity to learn about the four domains that are the focus of the "Framework for Effective Teaching."

While many ARs and principals are making plans to share information with their staff, we are going to have articles throughout the year highlighting important components.

We are going to start with dates that you should know:

- Tenured teachers in their Summative Review year: (once every 3 years)
- Sept. 15th Appraisal Notification Meeting prior to this date
- Sept. 30th Goals and Professional Growth Plan completed
- Ongoing Implementation of Professional Growth Plan
- Nov. 30th First Formal Observation has been completed
- Feb. 28th Second Formal Observation has been completed
- Ongoing Informal classroom visits and walk-throughs
- April 1st Submit end of year summary review of goals
- April 15th Conduct Summative Evaluation Conference and submit final report to HR

- Non-tenured teachers (first three years of OPS employment):
- Sept. 15th Appraisal Notification Meeting prior to this date
- Sept. 30th Goals and Professional Growth Plan completed
- Ongoing Implementation of Professional Growth Plan
- Oct. 1st First Formal Observation has been completed
- Nov. 30th Second Formal Observation has been completed
- Feb. 28th Third Formal Observation has been completed
- Ongoing Informal classroom visits and walk-throughs
- March 15th Submit end of year summary review of goals
- March 31st Conduct Summative Evaluation Conference and submit final report to HR

Remember to keep a record of all of your observations and professional papers in the OEA file provided to you.

Alternative Compensation

The Omaha Education Association and the Omaha Public Schools are now at a historic place: the leadership of both a major teachers' union and a large urban school district are, willingly and by our own initiative, entering into a groundbreaking collaboration to substantially change the way Omaha pays teachers.

Our current salary schedule, which allows additional compensation primarily through college credit hours and classroom longevity, does not reflect the complexity and diversity of the skills, knowledge and results that are necessary to meet the needs of today's students. Moreover, in the context of our regional and national challenge, it severely limits our ability to recruit, retain and reward the type of teaching corps our Omaha community deserves. We need to fundamentally reform our current teacher compensation system in ways that will:

- Reward initiative;
- Build system capacity to support the schools and classrooms;
- Integrate proven research;
- Acknowledge and strengthen a broad range of teachers' skills and knowledge; and
- Incorporate a strong appraisal system with effective professional development

The Association and the District are therefore launching a major systemic initiative to develop, implement, evaluate and sustain an alternative compensation system. This is not a human resources or finance project but an instructionally driven reform. It will include an intensive planning period during this school year followed by a multi-year pilot that will: (1) establish the linkage between teacher compensation and student learning; (2) ensure the broadest possible level of stakeholder communication, involvement and consensus; (3) provide comprehensive research on the effectiveness of the initiative and incorporate findings into mid-course corrections; and (4) build the District's capacity to sustain the compensation reform both organizationally and financially.

This reform will be done with teachers, not to them.

Any alternative compensation plan must:

1. **Bring in new, substantial and sustainable funding.**
2. **Not be based solely upon student performance.**
3. **Be negotiated and voted upon.**



Professional Development Log

Priority Calendar: November 26th

November 26th is a day without students. According to the OPS Priority Calendar, 3.5 hours are designated for EXCELS and 3.5 hours are to be designated for teacher planning and preparation. This means that half of the day can be spent in meetings and professional development to meet the goals of your building EXCELS plan.

The rest of the day is for you!

No meetings can be scheduled by administration during planning and preparation time.

Financial Assistance from the NEA

Problem

Credit card debt, outstanding school loans, a mortgage, car note, daycare expenses, and other bills causing you stress? You're not alone. Many NEA members need help to gain control of their finances and find ways to reduce debt.

Solution

NEA Member Benefits and the National Foundation for Credit Counseling (NFCC) have teamed up to provide financial literacy and debt management education to NEA members and their families.

A special Web page (www.debtadvice.org/nea) provides information about the financial counseling and education services offered through NFCC member agencies located nationwide. NFCC member agencies offer comprehensive financial and debt management services including:

- One-on-one financial counseling
- Financial education classes
- Bankruptcy counseling and education
- Housing counseling
- Reverse mortgage counseling



Certified financial counselors are available to help NEA members and their families develop customized solutions to their financial problems, either in person or by telephone. Many NFCC member agencies also offer Web-based support. Services are provided free or at very affordable rates.

Don't continue to struggle with your financial problems. Visit www.debtadvice.org/nea for more information, or call toll-free to find an NFCC member agency near you: 1-866-479-NEA2 (6322).

OEA Retirement Benefits Workshop Scheduled for December 3rd

Will you know enough about your benefits to make an informed decision about the many options you have at retirement? OEA-Retired and the OEA Retirement Committee will host a workshop on retirement benefits on Wednesday, December 3rd, to help you make that informed decision. The workshop will be held at the OEA Office, 4202 S. 57th Street. The workshop will start at 4:15 p.m. and last until approximately 6:00 p.m. If you need directions to the OEA Office, you can request directions when you make your reservation. Coffee and cookies will be provided.

Roger Rea, member of both the OEA-Retired organization and the OEA Retirement Committee, will again lead the session, and will present information on:

- How to estimate your retirement benefits
- Which of the six payment options might be best for you
- What are the buy-in and buy-back provisions
- Key items to remember as you prepare for retirement
- Health insurance after you retire
- The benefits of belonging to the Retired organizations



Mark your calendar now for December 3rd, and plan to attend this important informational session. The more you know about your retirement benefits, the better prepared you will be when you actually do decide to retire. Please call Lorrie at the OEA (346-0400) to reserve a place at the workshop. Bring a friend, bring your spouse, and take advantage of this opportunity to prepare wisely for your retirement.