



Raising achievement and closing the gaps for ALL students.

Tip-Off

February 11, 2021

2021 OEA General Election and NSEA State/District Election

Our local elections will be taking place from February 22nd at 8:00 am and will close on March 1st at 5:00pm.

Those positions that are up for election are...

- OEA Vice President of Member Benefits (3 Year Term 2021-2024) The ENTIRE membership votes for this position.
- (Three) Elementary members (3-year term 2021-2024). Only Elementary members vote for these positions.
- (One) Middle Level member (1 year 2021-2022). Only Middle School members vote for this position.
- (One) Middle Level member (3-year term 2021-2024). Only Middle School members vote for this position.
- (One) Senior High member (3-year term 2021-2024). Only Senior High members votes for this position.
- 22 NEA RA Delegates
- 52 NSEA Delegates

Voting will be handled by UNANIMOUS to follow the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA).

We will be using the home email addresses we have on file. It is critical that we have the most updated information to allow you to vote. Please contact the office to confirm your email address.

STATE/District ELECTIONS

NSEA elections for district positions are also happening. OEA is in the Metro District and the members will be voting for the following positions...

- Treasurer
- Secretary
- Executive Committee
 - ♦ Subdistricts 1,2,4
- NSEA Board (1 seat)

Members will vote beginning at 12:01 a.m. on Friday, Feb. 19. Voting will close at midnight on Sunday, March 14.

Voting will be handled by UNANIMOUS to follow the Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act of 1959 (LMRDA).

Recruit New Members For Your Chance to Win!

New teachers are eligible for partial year membership depending on their hire date. Your building AR should have membership forms available to join. For the rest of February, membership dues are at a prorated price. Now is the time to recruit those who have been on the fence about joining OEA. Dues are \$403.50 until the end of February! It is \$67.25/month until July. Dues in the full amount, will resume for the new school year in October. For the first new member you recruit, your name will be entered into a drawing for a reimbursement of half your dues. You will also receive a sweet treat with a \$20 Amazon gift card. It is a great time to join, we are stronger together!

Need forms or have questions? Contact the OEA Office 402-346-0400

2020 Calendar Year Tax Deductible Dues

Unfortunately, because of federal tax law changes, Association members will not receive an email from NSEA with their 2020 union dues amount for tax purposes.

Changes to the federal tax code have meant that educators will no longer be allowed to deduct dues to professional associations as a miscellaneous itemized deduction.

Prior to 2018, individuals could potentially deduct dues to professional associations, subject to the 2 percent of adjusted gross income. However, the tax code was changed in 2018 and miscellaneous itemized deductions are no longer allowed.

For more details, and for the best advice, contact your professional tax preparer. Your deductions can be found by reviewing your monthly bank statements or your cancelled checks or credit card statement.

That being said, teachers and education support professionals can claim an above-the-line federal tax deduction for the first \$250 of "out-of-pocket" spending on student supplies. The above-the-line deduction is important because an eligible school employee does not have to itemize deductions to qualify.

Further, if both spouses are educators, they can deduct up to \$500.

Constant Contact

OEA has been sending Constant Contact (CC) out to all members. This is the only way to get information out to YOU in a timely manner. Members have been reaching out saying they are not getting the emails. We have investigated it as much as we can and checked our records. Here are the reasons someone may not be receiving CC:

- No home email address on file.
- Unsubscribed. You will need to send in a letter/email asking us to add them back to CC and giving us permission to do so.
- Members who utilize Cox Communications, such as jack.smith@cox.net, as their email address will need to contact Cox and let them know that you are not able to receive the constant contact messages.
- Members who use Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo and MSN, need to check your Promotions, Social and Junk mail/Spam folders. If you still don't find them in any of those folders, you will need to contact those providers and let them know that you are not able to receive constant contact messages.
- Members need to contact Lorrie and make sure their current email address is on file.

Letter of Intent Date: March 15

State Statute Sets Date

Just a year ago, a few administrators across Nebraska began distributing letters of intent before the Christmas holiday.

That distribution was extraordinarily early, as state statute does not require Nebraska's K-12 teachers to return signed letters before March 15.

Superintendents, in an effort to get a handle on next year's staff sometimes request that this year's staff state their intentions early, suggesting letters of intent be returned as early as Feb.15 or March 1, or sometimes even earlier.

Letters of intent are important, and PK-12 educators should know their rights, said NSEA Director of Advocacy Trish Guinan.

State law allows school districts, on or after March 15 each year, to require certificated employees - teachers, counselors, speech pathologists, psychologists and others - to sign binding letters of intent and/or individual contracts. Such letters signify whether the teacher intends to return to employment in that district the next year.

In recent years, teachers have been asked to declare intentions early, said Guinan. Some administrators have sent letters as early as mid-January. In rare instances the letters are sent out before Jan. 1, sometimes asking for a response within days.

Guinan advises that members not rush to sign, but be deliberate and use the time allotted by law. She said state statute is clear: "A school district cannot require teachers to make a commitment before March 15."

Failure to sign and return the letter by stated deadlines that fall on or after March 15 is a threat to a teacher's employment.

Guinan offers this advise: If administrators distribute such a letter/contract prior to March 15, and ask for its return prior to that date, a local association representative should fax a copy to Guinan or their assigned organizational specialist at the NSEA (1-402-475-2630). In the meantime, an appropriate response to the letter by teachers is "I don't know yet" or "I'm not sure."

Letters that ask for a signature and return on March 15, are appropriate. In such cases, it is vital to sign and return it by the due date.

Questions? Call you organizational specialist, or Guinan, at 1-800-742-0047,

Committee Corner

Our committees are up
and running
and need members to
become active and serve.
All meetings are
scheduled at 4:45
unless noted otherwise.
Contact the office to get on
the email list to receive
the Zoom link.



Comp and Benefits Meeting
Wednesday, February 10
4:45pm

Instructional Advocacy
Tuesday, February 16
4:45pm

Governance Meeting
Wednesday, February 17
4:45pm

EMAC Meeting
Thursday, February 18
4:45pm

Public Community Relations
Tuesday, February 23
4:45pm

Retirement
Wednesday, February 24
4:45pm

PACE Meeting
Wednesday, February 24
4:45pm

MEMBERSHIP Meeting
Tuesday, March 2
4:45pm

OEA Tip-Off

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

Direct Inquiries to:

Robert Miller
robert.miller@nsea.org
402-346-0400

Sue Perkins
Communications Specialist
sue.perkins@nsea.org

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