

October 2011

Colorado Springs
Education Association
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Love Your MA (Master Agreement)

Article XIII.E.4.

Only allows students, having been sent to the office with a Level II referral, to be returned to your classroom after consultation with the teacher making the referral.

MOU on

Bullying Behavior

There is a Memorandum of Understanding between CSEA and District 11 that prohibits bullying or belittling behavior and seeks to ensure that teachers have climates which allow for free expression of thoughts and feelings.

Let us think of education as the means of developing our greatest abilities, because in each of us there is a private hope and dream which, fulfilled, can be translated into benefit for everyone and greater strength of the nation.

John F. Kennedy

Member Connection

Do I Really Belong?

By Tim Cross, UniServ Director

From time to time, members come in to talk with me about belonging to CSEA and their concerns about reconciling their political and personal beliefs with the public stances that they see CSEA, CEA and NEA taking.

Most members belong to our Association because they believe that we are a good organization that works to directly benefit them in their classrooms through collective bargaining, member advocacy, and influencing positions on school board and district policy. It's frustrating for some members when CEA or NEA take philosophical positions on politically and emotionally charged subjects, such as reproductive freedom and sexual orientation issues, that do not reflect their personal views.

I've found that it is important for all members to understand how policy and philosophical decisions are made in our organization at the local, state and national levels. Members elect fellow members to be their representatives as Association Representatives at the building level, on our Board of Directors at the local level, and as delegates to the CEA Delegate Assembly and NEA Representative Assembly at the state and national levels. It is at these assemblies and by these representatives whom members elect at the grassroots level that policy and philosophical decisions are made.

When CEA and NEA take positions on issues, it is because the members elected to establish policy want to create tolerance and understanding of issues among all members, even when they may not personally agree with other members' choices.

To illustrate, some folks don't agree with a person who wears a shirt that says, "Those who can't do, teach." However, those who disagree with the shirt's message must extend a level of tolerance to the wearer of the shirt.

The same is true on the issue of freedom of choice regarding any private matter. The philosophy that speaks to ignorance is that as long as people are fully informed of consequences, they should be empowered to make all choices that are personal, even if others disagree.

It is important to remember that CEA and NEA strive to emphasize that every child is unique, with unique worth, and that every child deserves dignity and equal treatment. It, therefore, isn't a stretch to believe that adults should be treated with the same respect and regard we extend to children.

Recognizing how hard you work every day at what you do, when you seek change in any organization of which you are a member, you have to stand up and be heard. When CSEA seeks to cause change in education and District 11, it requires us to stand up and identify that the change needs to occur.

If you seek to have CSEA, CEA and NEA be the organization that represents you, organize like-minded people to drive the change you want to see. Run to be an Association Representative, to be on our Board of Directors, to be a delegate at CEA Delegate Assembly or a representative at NEA Representative Assembly, and be heard. (Please see page three of this newsletter for information on upcoming elections for CEA Delegate Assembly.)

Be the change you wish to see! This is how to make CSEA your professional organization and to create a place where you do belong. Because you do belong!

Access Card Moment

By Kevin Vick, CSEA Vice President

I recently experienced the simultaneous bad luck and good fortune of having my television break. I was happy because my TV was old and small; unhappy because now I have to figure out how to afford a new one. I have looked at several places like Best Buy, Costco, and department stores, but I am having difficulty finding a TV that has the features I want at a price I can afford.

Just for comparison, I thought I would check out the Access card for deals. Man, am I glad I did! Many of the same TVs that I have been looking at in stores are available through the electronic section of the Access card site. What I found is that many of the televisions are anywhere from \$100 to \$500 cheaper using the Access benefit than they are in local stores, and some are the same deals that the employees in those stores get. Plus, the vendors have free shipping, so the television will come right to my house.

I haven't yet decided what television I am going to get, but I am looking at a Toshiba 46" LED flat screen. The discount is 30% off, or about \$300 in savings. I can't wait! This also means that *I will offset almost half of my dues for the year with this one purchase.*

I hope you are having the same experience with the Access Card that I am. Let us know when you find a great deal. We would love to share it with our members.

Using Your NEA Member Benefits?

We recently obtained a quote on term life insurance using NEA Member Benefits. A 33 year old non-smoking NEA member can purchase a 15 year term life insurance policy with a \$50,000 benefit for only \$9.08 monthly. To get a quick bid on a policy that fits your needs, visit www.neamb.com and look on the right side of the page.

BE STRONG. BELONG.

By Jeanne Kleinman Williams, Association Representative, Hunt

Why do I belong? A better question: "Why wouldn't I belong?" There are the obvious reasons to belong: protection, the Master Agreement, and member benefits. While all of these give me peace of mind, what I feel for our organization comes from within. CSEA, CEA, and NEA offer a spirit of belonging, a place to "hang one's hat," where you are amongst friends.

I have been employed in District 11 for 35 years, and a member for that long. CSEA has played an integral part in finding support. The building is more than bricks and mortar. Open the door and you will find four of your best advocates: Denise, Laura, Kevin, and Tim. Whatever your issue, you will feel better because they are genuinely concerned with you, not just as a member, but as a person. Take advantage of being part of a larger community in a world that can leave you feeling alone. Put yourself on a ballot to run for CEA's Delegate Assembly. You will feel uplifted when you are in a room of your colleagues who put children first, who have faced struggles head on and are there to find solutions. Take an even bigger step and run for Representative Assembly. Once you sing "America the Beautiful" with 10,000 of your friends, it will have an impact that will stay when you feel like you're fighting a battle alone.

How do I know this? I was a late bloomer and began active involvement in our organization approximately seven years ago, becoming an Association Representative, serving on the CSEA Board of Directors, attending Colorado Delegate Assemblies, and the National Representative Assemblies. Listening to other committed individuals who have devoted themselves to public education will let you know that, "Many small people, in many small places, do many small things that can alter the face of the world."

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School Board Interviews

By Anne Suntken, Achieve K-12 AR

One hot day + one tiny room + six willing participants + 12 hours = a surprisingly interesting day. Recently a committee of CSEA members gathered to interview the eight candidates running for the District 11 School Board. Prior to the interviews, candidates completed a questionnaire that allowed us a glimpse into their thoughts on issues that are most important to CSEA. Then, during the hour long interviews, we, the interview committee, honed in on specific issues relating to teacher assessment and how it would be measured by SB-191, the School Board's willingness to hold the District's administration accountable, their willingness to work with CSEA and other issues we felt needed clarification.

Because of the diverse mix of teachers in the room, the interview committee was able to look at these issues with differing points of view. Although some candidate answers made us furrow our brows in confusion, most opened up dialogue that helped clarify what we, as representatives of CSEA, thought best supported the interests of the teachers in District 11.

Tips 4 Teachers

Adrien Helm, sixth grade reading teacher at Meadowlawn Middle School in St. Petersburg, Florida

My sixth grade reading students look forward to "Friday Funnies." All week I clip comic strips (usually four or five only) which illustrate aspects of language use, and project them in class with the overhead projector. Often they provide excellent examples of puns, double entendre, or simply quality writing. They also are an excellent, brief vehicle for cultural education. In addition, by asking, "Do you get this?" I am able to see where I need to structure lessons in critical reading.

RESULTS FOR STUDENTS

By Kevin Vick, CSEA Vice President

Educational practice is currently dominated by the need to show results. What is missing is a conversation about two important questions: "Which results are most important?" and "Are we engaged in practices that will generate the best outcomes for our most important results?"

There is truly only one result that matters. That is the finished product of all of our collective efforts. Are we graduating students that are ready and capable of handling life after graduation? In the words of the District, are we truly creating the ACHIEVE graduate? The ACHIEVE graduate, however, has only one component (Academically Prepared) that is even marginally measurable. Our District, and the educational system in general, it seems, is obsessed with defining and calculating this one metric. The rest of the components of the ACHIEVE graduate, however, are vitally important and are clearly distinctive, but are neglected in the over-riding need to show measurable outcomes. The evidence of neglect is clear throughout a student's career, starting in elementary school.

There is a major effort to find a way to give more planning time to elementary teachers, and rightfully so, but the larger question that needs to be asked is, "Is our current elementary schedule good for kids?" In viewing several schedules from around the District, the answer has to be no. Our District schools now have more time mandates than there is time in the day, especially when one includes the new physical activity requirements and the new ST math. This over-scheduling of mandates creates a situation where other vital instruction is left out, namely science and social studies. What is most worrisome is that most of these requirements involve a regimented amount of structured seat-time. Most adults would not be capable of sustaining that which we are expecting of our second graders.

As a leader of CSEA, as a teacher, and mostly as a parent of a first-grader in the District, I am gravely concerned about the level of time mandates in our elementary schools. I cannot imagine how I would have lasted in school if my entire day was nothing more than a long study session for a standardized test. Is this what we want for our kids? We need to have this conversation as a District soon.

CSEA has formed a task force to address the issue of getting additional planning time for elementary teachers. We recently held an open meeting for all elementary teachers who are members to have an opportunity to get their voices into this discussion. Over the course of this year, we want to provide additional opportunities for members to let us know what they think on various subjects. Some of our questions are: "What would be your ideal schedule?" "What testing do you find truly valuable in your job?" These are the types of questions that will help shape the future of CSEA, because in the end, it is all about results for students. Please send us your thoughts at csea@coloradoea.org.

Who Makes Policy for CEA?

Have you ever wondered how CEA's policy is established? No one person or small group sets policy for CEA. The course of CEA is charted by the democratically elected representatives at the annual CEA Delegate Assembly held in Denver, and will be held from April 26-28 this year.

The 300 person Assembly, consisting of delegates elected from throughout the state, establishes CEA policy regarding school reform issues, philosophical resolutions, and legislative agendas, and other topics.

All CSEA members are eligible to run for this office. Nomination forms will be distributed at the December 13 AR meeting and will be online at www.cseateacher.org at that time. Elections will be held in February.

CSEA is entitled to approximately 30 delegates. Members of our Board of Directors who were elected to their positions on the Board by the membership at large are automatically delegates to the Assembly.

You can influence your Association's path by getting involved and running to be a delegate. This is a great way to learn the mechanics of how our organization works. We encourage you to consider running to represent your fellow CSEA members at the CEA Delegate Assembly next spring.

Scholarship For Graduate Studies

The Robert H. Johnson Scholarship Grant is a \$1,500 CEA scholarship that recognizes a CEA member committed to improving his or her professional skills. The scholarship is named after Dr. Robert Johnson, who was the CEA Executive Director from 1968 - 1974.

The cash award is for tuition, books, housing, mileage, and other expenses directly related to the recipient's educational program in one academic year.

Teacher applicants must be working on a graduate degree; support staff applicants must be working on an undergraduate degree or other education program related to their employment.

Past CSEA members who have received this award are **Stacy Strobel**, and **Clint Knox**, who both currently teach at Doherty.

To learn more about the scholarship, please visit www.coloradoea.org/TeachingLearning/GrantAward.

CSEA Happenings

Thursday, November 10	4:00 - 10:00
Fondue Fun at the Melting Pot	
Tuesday, November 15	4:30
AR Meeting	
Tesla	
Wednesday, November 16	4:30 - 6:00
Women's Self Defense Class	
Location to be announced later	

Welcome To Our New Members! We'll Make You Proud To Belong!



Patricia Allen, Bijou
 Rebecca Bailey, Wasson
 Andrea Brooks, Ad Building
 Linda Ellis, Rudy
 Karen Khaligh, Hunt
 Nancy Law, Stratton
 Julie Maggio, Rudy
 Rachel Meissner, Jackson
 Rich Parkinson, Digital
 Kristi Tipps-Deutsch, Galileo
 Juana Vega, North
 Rebecca Woost, Taylor

Family Swim Night Fun!

Decorah Setter, CSEA's Association Representative at Keller, and her daughter were among the CSEA members and their families who recently attended The Extension's Family Swim Night. CSEA members got a reduced entry fee and gathered in the community room for food and drink. Everyone had a great time, especially the kids! We hope you'll join us next time!



Fondue Night Returns!

Back by popular demand is Fondue Fun Night for CSEA members. Last year's event was such a success we're doing a repeat! Join us on Thursday, November 10th at The Melting Pot for an evening of great food, socializing with current friends, and making new friends.

There will be a three course offering with a reduced price of \$25 per person, plus tax and an 18% gratuity. There will also be drink specials. What more could you ask for...a yummy dinner, fun with friends, a super price...it sounds perfect to us! Plus, there's no school the next day! Last year this was a sold-out event, so mark your calendar now. More information will come soon!

Elementary Planning Time Meeting at CSEA

CSEA members met recently at an after-school work session to discuss ways of getting more planning time. Please see Kevin Vick's article on page three to learn more about our efforts to assist elementary teachers with planning time concerns.



Left to right: **Tim Cross**, UniServ Director; **Nicole Dickson**, Trailblazer; **Jen Bosler**, Grant; and **Helen Murphy**, Steele. Background: **Teresa Nichols**, Grant

Self Defense Class

Allen Kishbaugh, a parent of three District 11 students, and a certified martial arts instructor, is offering a free Women's Only self defense class for CSEA members. Just in time for Black Friday and Christmas shopping, the class will be presented on November 16, from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. at a location to be determined.

The class will include an overview of verbal and motor skills (with time to practice), situations requiring heightened awareness, and general information on how to keep ourselves safe.

Contact Leslie Miller at millela@d11.org for more information on this class.

Concerned About Holiday Spending?

Many of us face challenges as we prepare for holiday spending. Member Benefits has a comprehensive plan on keeping holiday spending under control, including not only gift purchases but entertaining and decorating as well. To learn more, visit www.neamb.com and type in "holiday spending" in the search bar in the upper right of the home page.