

August 2013

The Advocate

GAHANNA-JEFFERSON EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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GJEA Reps @ NEA in Atlanta

In Atlanta, from July 1 - 6, GJEA President **Jenny Palguta**, Vice President **Tim Skamfer**, Negotiations Chair **Dwayne Marshall**, **Rita Gore**, and **Tia Holliman** joined 8000 other delegates from all 50 states for the 151st annual meeting and the 92nd representative assembly of the National Education Association.

Delegates heard speeches from NEA President Dennis Van Roekel, NEA Executive Director John Stocks, National Teacher of the Year Jeff Charbonneau, and California's Governor Jerry Brown -- who received "America's Greatest Education Governor Award" from NEA. Also, current Central President and OEA Vice President-elect Scott DiMauro addressed the delegates as chair of NEA's Committee on Legislation.



Daily, throughout the assembly, delegates participated in state caucus meetings beginning at 7:00 AM at their hotels. At 10:00 AM, business involving the full delegation continued at Atlanta's convention center -- lasting until at least 5:30

PM. Much time was spent on the 94 new business items that were proposed by the delegates. Each item was introduced, debated, possibly amended, and then adopted, defeated, or referred to committee.

This year, the top two topics of discussion -- based on the new business items

-- were successful implementation of the common core standards and high stakes testing. There is a huge national concern that high stakes testing will continue (and should not) while we are still getting up to speed on the new common core standards. Aren't we still "assembling the airplane as it is heading down the runway for takeoff?" The delegates were in agreement that the states need more, ongoing professional development in order to successfully implement the new common core standards.

For a complete summary of the NEA RA -- including text of the amendments, resolutions, and new business items, along with photos, visit www.nea.org/ra.

Aug. 15: Join Us for Breakfast

As we all are aware, the beginning of the new school year is approaching more quickly than ever! Your GJEA officers sincerely hope that this summer has been one of rejuvenation, and that you will be charged up and ready to return to your classrooms to welcome new groups of students as we begin another school year. In fact, prior to welcoming our new students, we will first be welcoming what appears to be a record number of new teachers to Gahanna -- 68 as of mid-July!

The first official day back for returning teachers will be Thursday, August 15th, with

the annual district assembly in the Lincoln High School auditorium. Just prior to that meeting, GJEA will host a "light breakfast" get-together in the high school cafeteria, beginning at 7:30 AM.

Plan now to attend this event to welcome new staff members, as well as to greet friends and colleagues from your own buildings and from throughout the district. This is an excellent way to kick off the 2013-2014 school year. Have an enjoyable rest of the summer until we all head back to school on Thursday, August 15th!

Mark Your Calendar:

8/8	Bd of Ed Meets @ 6:30 PM
8/12	GJEA BOD Retreat
8/13	Next Negotiations Session
8/15	First Day for Teachers
8/16	Work Day for Teachers
8/19	Grades K-9 Begin
8/20	Grades 10-12 Begin



GJEA Retreat



The GJEA Board of Directors will hold its annual retreat on Monday, August 12th at the Airport Marriott from 9:00 am until 2:00 pm. Breakfast and lunch will

be served. The morning session will include the August business meeting, along with an update from our OEA Labor Relations Consultant **Lynn Davis**. After lunch, there will be a presentation by OEA on the So-Called "Right to Work" legislation that has, unfortunately, been introduced.

If you are interested in learning about how you can become more involved with your association, please contact **GJEA President Jenny Palguta**. Also, you are welcome to attend the August retreat to find out more about the importance of association work. **Please RSVP to Secretary Paige Harding**.

Each officer's contact information (including a personal e-mail address) is printed on the front page of each month's *Advocate*. Please do not hesitate to contact any one of us whenever you have a question, concern, comment, or a suggestion. Text, e-mail, or call!

eDues

During the 2012-2013 school year, a group of GJEA members chose to participate in an "eDues" pilot program through OEA. Instead of using payroll deduction, members paid their monthly association dues through either electronic withdrawal from a personal checking or savings account, or through a personal credit card.

Because the program worked very smoothly, OEA is seeking more volunteers to use this alternative payment program for membership dues. Your building reps will have sign-up information for those members who are interested in participating for the 2013-2014 school year.

Delegate Election Notice

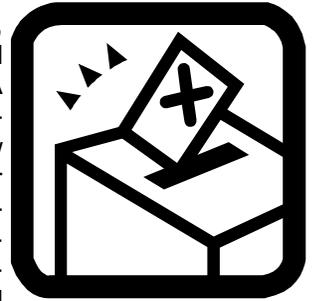
During the last week of September, GJEA will hold elections for delegates to the 2012-2013 OEA and NEA Representative Assemblies. OEA delegates will represent our local membership at the December 7 and May 9-10 Representative Assemblies, along with the Central OEA/NEA District RA, which will be held in April.

Our NEA delegates will represent the GJEA membership at the annual RA of the National Education Association. The NEA RA always takes place during the first week of July, and will be held in Denver next summer.

We are anticipating that we will need at least ten OEA delegates and three or four NEA delegates. Members who are interested in running to be a delegate should contact **GJEA President Jenny Palguta** no later than September 18 to have their names placed on the ballot.

Also, prior to the end of this

school year, we will hold our GJEA officer elections for new two-year terms. Persons interested in running should keep this in mind.



Questions about the RA delegate election process or about our local officer election process may be directed to any of the officers.

Legal Program



Did you know that one of your benefits as an OEA member is the OEA/NEA Attorney Referral Program?

Association members (and their spouses) who work in Franklin County may access the program through Cloppert, Latanick, Sauter & Washburn LLP.

Benefits include: up to four free 30-minute consultation sessions per year; free notary public service; free durable power of attorney for health care and a living will; reduced hourly rates for all types of personal legal work; and reduced contingent fees.

They are located at 225 E. Broad Street, Columbus (in the OEA Building) and their phone number is 614.461.4455. Visit the firm's web site at www.cloppertlaw.com to learn more about this excellent benefit of association membership.

So-Called "Right to Work" is Harmful to Us All

Don't let corporate interests fool you with the deceptive misnomer "Right to Work." They're hoping you never realize So-Called Right to Work means less freedom for workers, not more. So-Called Right to Work also threatens the safety of our working conditions by stifling workers' freedom to point out potential safety issues on the job. Once again, greedy people are trying to tip the balance even more in their favor at the expense of the middle class and Ohio's working families. We need to PROTECT Ohio Workers' Rights.

So-Called Right to Work (SCRtW) does not provide a financial benefit to workers. It hurts them — financially and physically. A viable labor movement is the best way to advance the well-being of the middle class.

Here's what the empirical research

shows in terms of worker compensation and workplace safety: The average worker in a SCRtW state earns about \$5300 less per year than a person working in a full bargaining state. Worker fatalities in the construction industry are 51% higher in SCRtW states.

In Ohio, teachers working in non-union charter schools receive annual salaries that are about \$16,000 less than those paid to traditional public school teachers. The gap is even larger when compared to what for-profit charter schools pay their teachers. The rate of employer-sponsored health insurance and pensions is lower in SCRtW states. Economic development is not enhanced by SCRtW laws. In fact, SCRtW laws almost certainly hinders growth and prosperity.

Research finds no relationship between the presence of a SCRtW law and state unemployment rates, per capita income, or job growth. In fact, unions in bargaining states raise worker pay by roughly twenty percent.

In addition to fewer, lower paying, less safe jobs and an erosion of infrastructure and decreased levels of public services, SCRtW robs our country of its democratic principles. Research shows that a weakened labor movement results in lower voter turnout and less participation by ordinary citizens in the political process. Maybe that is exactly what the SCRtW supporters want — a way to keep the political cronies of the top 1% in power so their interests will be forever served. SCRtW is a carrot for the select few at the top of the economic food chain and a stick for everyone else. **Beware of SCRtW!**

“Dear GJEA, Thank You Very Much!”

Dear GJEA,

Thank you so much for the gift card and the lovely retirement dinner at the Hilton. Everything was top notch. I was so pleased.

Sincerely,

Mary Anne Donato

Dear Fellow GJEA Members,

I wanted to thank you for such a delightful evening at the Hilton for the retirement celebration. It was wonderful sharing memories with my peers. I loved listening to Cindi share the reflections of the retiring teachers. They were funny, sad, and most of all, genuine. The meal was delicious, and when we thought that was treat enough, we received a gift card to Easton.

Thank you for such a generous evening. Best wishes to everyone's future!

Sincerely,

Colleen Alexander Green

Dear Jenny,

I wanted to thank you and everyone else involved with the retirement celebration for a wonderful evening! My husband and I thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. It was so special to share that time with friends and fellow retirees. I have shared with so many people what a great evening it was. So, thank you so much for all you do for GJEA and for this memorable evening.

Sincerely,

Sandy Howard

Dear GJEA,

Thank you so much for the wonderful dinner and the gift card -- such a surprise! I have really enjoyed teaching in Gahanna and I have so much to remember from all of these years; friends, students, parents.

Sincerely,

Lynn Mauch



Dear GJEA,

Thank you very much for the lovely retirement dinner for the class of 2013 and recognition of my 35 years of teaching in the Gahanna-Jefferson schools. Thank you for the Easton gift card. Best wishes to the teachers in the district as you continue to educate our wonderful children.

Peace,

Karen McCafferty

Dear GJEA,

I can't begin to tell you how special I felt at the retirement banquet! Thanks so very much to everyone involved with the event. I appreciated the delicious dinner, entertaining program and gift card a great deal. Thanks for the wonderful memory!!

Sincerely,

Lori Peer

Dear Jenny and GJEA,

Thank you so much for your hard work and dedication to the staff and students in the Gahanna Schools. I had a fabulous time this evening. You helped make memories for each of us tonight, and for that I am truly grateful. Thank you so much for your time and talents. You are sincerely appreciated.

Sincerely,

Jill Rak

Dear GJEA,

Thank you very much for the evening of memories, honors, good food, and friendships (the gift card too!). I enjoyed the personal reflections from all the retirees. It was a reminder of the caring, talented teachers that we have in Gahanna. I feel very fortunate to have been a part of Gahanna Schools. I leave with many memories to treasure. Thank you for the support that GJEA has and continues to provide to teachers, children, and the community of Gahanna.

Sincerely,



Dear GJEA,

Thank you so much for a wonderful retirement dinner. My family and I truly had a great time. It was a perfect sendoff to end my teaching career. I appreciate all the hard work that went into planning the evening. Thank you also for the gift card. I will put it to good use and it is much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Kay Tomesek

Dear Jenny,

I just wanted to thank you and GJEA for the lovely dinner and program at Easton Hilton. The retirees feel honored and I know how much I appreciated the special evening. Also, thanks for the gift card for a future shopping spree! Lastly, I want to thank you for your countless hours in helping to support our teachers. We are blessed to have a strong team working for our union.

Sincere thanks,

Lori Whipple

Dear GJEA,

Thank you for the R. Burton Reed Scholarship. It will help me pursue my degree in Special Education.

Thank you,

Kelly Byrum

Dear GJEA,

I am writing to thank you for your generous \$2000 John Allen Memorial Scholarship. I was very excited to learn that I had been selected as a recipient of this scholarship, and I enjoyed attending the Retirement and Scholarship Banquet with my parents.

I am looking forward to continuing my education at Otterbein University in the fall where I will major in Early Childhood Education. I am extremely appreciative of the financial assistance you have provided. It will be of great help to me in paying for my college expenses. Thank you so much for your support!

Sincerely,

Abby Hersey



2013 GJEA Retirement Dinner Highlights



2013 Retirees In Attendance at the GJEA Retirement Dinner



Hall of Fame Inductees: Susan Dowdy and Karen McDonnell-Brown



2013 Scholarship Winners: Abbey Hersey, Luke Liston, Kelly Byrum

Excerpts From the Keynote Address at the NEA RA



The following excerpts are from NEA President Dennis Van Roekel's Keynote Address

to the NEA RA Delegates on July 3, 2013 in Atlanta.

"Fifty years ago this summer, a preacher from Atlanta stood at the Lincoln Memorial in DC, and delivered one of the most famous speeches of the 20th Century.

That great leader, of course, was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. His church, Ebenezer Baptist, sits only about a mile from here.

His words that day..."I Have a Dream..." captured the heart and hopes of a nation. To this day, they inspire us...lift us up...and challenge us.

And all these years later, Dr. King's Dream still calls to us. And so we maintain hope. We continue the struggle. We don't give up.

And we, the National Education Association, we understand that Dr. King's dreams and our values of equal opportunity, a just society, are inextricably linked to equity in public

education.

That connection, that link — makes us who we are. When we talk about "DNA" — we mean the ideas and values that are central to our identity.

As the science teachers in the room will gladly tell you, DNA comes in strands — and our DNA has three.

One strand is our work for social justice. This goes back to our beginning 156 years ago — before the Civil War — when 47 educators gathered for the call to create the NEA. Since then, we have been a strong and consistent voice for equal opportunity in education, economic and civil rights for all.

Another strand is standing up for the rights of our members and affiliates. We do this at the bargaining table, in the courts, and in the halls of state legislatures and Congress.

We engage in collective action every day, fighting attacks against public education, attacks on workers' rights and the middle class, wherever and whenever they arise.

The third strand is our work as professionals — it's the reason we

America!"

It's what we do everyday as individuals, but also what we do together as an organization...working to lead our professions, and taking responsibility for our own professional practice.

We believe that each one of us, as an educator, plays a critical role in student success. If we didn't believe that, we wouldn't be here.

These three strands of DNA are part of our nature. They are embodied in our core values, mission, and vision. And what binds these three strands together is the passion our members have for students, and for public education.

These three strands have guided us throughout our 156-year journey — even when the path at times was rocky.

Please go to nea.org/ra to read the full text of NEA President Dennis Van Roekel's Keynote Address to the Delegates.

