

# NEA DIRECTORS'

## 2019-20 ANNUAL REPORT





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February 18, 2020

## A MESSAGE TO THE MTA 2020 ANNUAL MEETING DELEGATES

Dear MTA Delegates:

For nearly six years, I have had the honor and privilege of serving as the president of the greatest professional organization in the world — the National Education Association (NEA).

I've always believed in the sacred duty of all educators to be professionals and to care for the whole student — mind, body and character — no matter how they arrive and no matter their learning ability or the condition of their homes, health or emotions. As I heard one of our members describe it, our job as educators is to imagine that each of our students carries into the classroom an invisible suitcase filled with whatever is going on in their lives. This educator says her job is to help students unpack their suitcases in the morning, and then help them repack at the end of the day with contents that are a bit “fluffier and brighter.”

Professionalism also carries with it the responsibility for individual and collective action that is directed toward making the promise of public education a reality and preparing the whole student to become a successful adult.

We have seen this sort of unprecedented action from educators across the nation. You continue to fight the expansion of charter schools and work to reduce higher education costs borne by students and their families. You are also mobilizing to end the adverse impact of high-stakes testing, address fairness issues for adjunct faculty members in public higher education, win a living wage for Education Support Professionals, and provide educators with a fair and dignified retirement.

I want to salute and thank the MTA for taking action to ensure that every student in the state of Massachusetts receives a quality public education. You have worked hard to defend public education during some very trying times, and you have made us all proud.

By joining forces with other organizations — through the Fund Our Future initiative — you scored a huge victory when the *Student Opportunity Act* was signed into law last year. This legislation will provide billions of dollars in additional Chapter 70 state aid for K-12 public education! This is an extraordinary achievement.

In response to the 2018 Supreme Court ruling in *Janus v. AFSCME*, MTA also applauded the Legislature's passage of *An Act Relative to Collective Bargaining Dues* to override the governor's veto and pass a new law that strengthens public sector unions' rights.

I am proud of the MTA for your efforts to seize the opportunities within your reach that are moving us closer to equity and opportunity for all students, and fairness for all workers.

MTA, 2020 will be a historic year for our nation, and our association has the opportunity to play a historic leadership role. Moving forward, everything that we do must continue to be driven by the bedrock belief that a great public school is a basic right for every student.

Sincerely,

*Lily Eskelsen García*

Lily Eskelsen García,  
*President, National Education Association*

## MASSACHUSETTS NEA DIRECTORS



Ryan  
Hoyt



Zena Link



Deborah  
McCarthy



Betsy Preval



Dean Robinson



Candace  
Shivers

## A LETTER FROM YOUR MASSACHUSETTS NEA DIRECTORS

To our fellow MTA Annual Meeting delegates,

Greetings! It gives us great pleasure to welcome you to the 2020 MTA Annual Meeting. This year has been an especially busy one for your six NEA Directors.

In September we gathered in Washington, D.C., for our Fall Super Week. While in our nation's capital, we spent our first full day lobbying on behalf of NEA's legislative priorities in the offices of U.S. Senator Ed Markey and U.S. Representatives Jim McGovern and Bill Keating.

Our NEA Board meeting focused on the presidential election, with an emphasis on using the NEA website as often as possible when engaging our members. The website *strongpublicschools.org* is designed to provide our members with detailed information about the candidates and their positions.

In December and January, your NEA Directors were engaged in public education forums that NEA co-hosted with MSNBC. Seven presidential candidates discussed their views on economic, racial and social justice issues, and the candidates — former Vice President Joe Biden; Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana; Senators Michael Bennet, Amy Klobuchar, Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren; and businessman/philanthropist Tom Steyer answered questions from educators, parents and students about how they would support strong public schools. Next, we joined MTA leadership and members in four presidential tele-town hall conference calls. We heard from the Warren, Sanders and Biden committees, along with former Massachusetts Governor Deval Patrick.

In February, your NEA Directors returned to Washington for another Super Week. This time we were able to meet with the offices of Senator Warren and Representatives Seth Moulton and Steve Lynch to advance NEA's legislative agenda.

The highlight of our winter Super Week was attending the 50th Annual NEA Foundation Salute to Excellence in Education Gala. Awards for Teaching Excellence were bestowed upon educators from across the United States. The California Casualty awardees, selected by their NEA state affiliates, are educators who represent the best of their profession.

As this report was prepared, NEA was scheduled to be holding its spring Super Week and Board of Directors meeting. We will be thinking of you all at the MTA Annual Meeting while we advocate for great public schools on your behalf. Here's to another wonderful year of engagement, advocacy, and fighting for the schools our members and students deserve.

In solidarity,

Ryan Hoyt (Waltham)  
Zena Link (Weston)  
Deborah McCarthy (Hull)  
Betsy Preval (Cambridge)  
Dean Robinson (UMass Amherst/MSP)  
Candace Shivers (MCCC/Mt. Wachusett)

## WORKING AGAINST THE SCHOOL-TO-PRISON PIPELINE

*Ohio activist provides NEA Board with tools to improve school discipline*



*NEA President Lily Eskelsen García, pictured with Zakiya Sankara-Jabar and the NEA Board Black Caucus. Sankara-Jabar helped to create model school discipline language and advocates for more counselors instead of more cops on campus.*

*This article appeared in the February 2020 issue of the NEA Directors' Newsletter.*

**T**he NEA Board of Directors heard from Zakiya Sankara-Jabar, national field organizer of the Dignity in Schools Campaign, as part of its Black Observance during the February Board meeting.

Sankara-Jabar, a native of Ohio, began her social justice work following her son's admittance into a Cleveland-area preschool. She said the issues began almost immediately. Phone calls home — or more specifically, directly to her while she was in class at a local university — about her son's behavior. Her personal experience sparked her research and activism about racial justice in schools.

"Kids are being criminalized for normal childhood stuff," she told the Board. "The data supports the fact that black and Latino

students, and students with disabilities, are disproportionately targeted by suspensions.

"She is unapologetic for who she is and what she believes in," NEA Black Caucus Chair Cecily Myart-Cruz told the Board. "She is a badass and isn't afraid of speaking the truth that others don't have the courage to say."

In addition to her work with the Dignity in Schools Campaign, she is also one of the founders of Racial Justice NOW in Dayton, Ohio.

"Black and Latino students, and students with disabilities, are disproportionately targeted by suspensions," Sankara-Jabar said. "We must look to positive approaches to discipline. Restorative practices, when done with fidelity, can work. People must understand it is not a program, it is a philosophy. You literally must change how

you think about discipline across your school."

Sankara-Jabar left the NEA Board with calls for action that include the following:

- Build strong, authentic relationships with students and parents.
- Affirm your students.
- Communicate with parents.
- Work with community groups to help change bad policy.
- Work to create a positive school climate with students, families and administration.
- Use resources from the Dignity in Schools Campaign.

To learn more about the Dignity in Schools Campaign, visit <https://dignityinschools.org>.

## NEA BOARD RECEIVES TRAINING TO BUILD BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE

*This article appeared in the October 2019 issue of the NEA Directors' Newsletter.*

Over 100 NEA directors met on Sunday morning of the recent Super Week to begin training to understand white supremacy culture and its implications for NEA. This training was presented by the NEA Center for Social Justice.

Sabrina Tines from the Center for Governance introduced the session. Both the Centers for Governance and Social Justice partnered to train the highest level of NEA leadership to most effectively look through the lens of social and racial justice in all that it does.

Hilario Benzon, senior policy analyst in the Human and Civil Rights Department, then took the reins to tell the Board about a recent experience he had in Washington, D.C., that forced him to speak out in support of fellow professionals who were being verbally attacked. This incident underscored the importance of learning all that we're able to because if you know better, you do better.

Cory Wofford of the Center for Governance reviewed NEA's vision and core values to

keep them at the forefront. He discussed NEA's leadership competencies and its Leadership Learning and Development Objectives, which include:

- Developing common language, specifically about the organization's work on racial justice in education.
- Enhancing education leaders' ability to critically examine issues of race that permeate the classroom and educational institutions and to enhance their ability to strategize to create local remedies.
- Strengthening the organization's ability to analyze issues of race and becoming more explicit about race and racial justice while actively advocating for change.
- Creating experiential learning that provides structured learning and sharing opportunities to discuss key concepts and develop discussion skills and techniques.

For the NEA Board of Directors, participation in this and other trainings is critical in advancing the organizational goals of its racial and social priority work. The intent of the

training was to prepare each Board member with the competency to be able to: Use their own voice and the voices of others to elevate and impact conversations about racial and social justice, including directing people toward resources and tools for activism; and build, connect, engage and grow a community of activists in the communities where we live and work to advance NEA's racial and social justice policies that directly impact public education.

As the training began and Benzon was walking the Board through the history of white supremacy culture, the focus changed from that of a standard training to a much more personal conversation about race and racism and how it affects each of us. The facilitators allowed the Board to have those difficult conversations, realizing that they are a necessary part of change. So, while the three-hour training was not completed, it began in a way that will allow all Board members to continue to learn and grow as social and racial justice advocates for our nation's students, NEA members and themselves.

## STRONG PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2020 CAMPAIGN

*NEA Board of Directors members showed their solidarity by donning "Are You the One?" shirts at NEA headquarters last fall. The shirts, provided as a promotion for the Strong Public Schools 2020 campaign, read "Are you for kids? Or are you just kidding?" on the back. The Board devoted time during meetings to messaging as members headed into Election 2020.*



## NEA TASK FORCE REPORTS OUT FINDINGS ON RECRUITING EDUCATORS OF COLOR

This article appeared in the May 2019 issue of the NEA Directors' Newsletter.



Eric Brown

At the 2018 NEA Representative Assembly in Minneapolis, the delegation passed New Business Item 117, which stated:

NEA will create a task force that consists of Aspiring Educators from HBCUs, HSIs, MSIs, Tribal Colleges,

Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions to make recommendations to the Board of Directors regarding the recruitment of educators of color and the resources they need to become lifelong active educators and union leaders.

The findings of that task force were presented to the NEA Board of Directors during its May 2019 meeting. NEA Executive Committee member Eric Brown (Illinois) chaired the task force, which was comprised of 16 other educators from 14 other states. The task force met once in person and virtually three other times.

“The task force was full of inspiring and aspiring educators who care deeply about the future of our profession and the students we serve,” Brown said. He also noted some alarming statistics in terms of the current number of educators of color. While 52.2 percent of preK-12 students are students of color (26.6 million), just 19.9 percent of educators identify as of color (3.8 million) according to a 2018 National Center for



The 2018 RA passed NBI 117, which asked the NEA to examine recruiting educators of color into the profession and into leadership roles.

Education Statistics study. A separate study from the National Bureau of Economic Research noted the importance of teachers of color on the educational and economic impact of black children. Black children who are exposed to at least one black teacher before third grade are 13 percent more likely to enroll in college, and those who had two black teachers were 32 percent more likely to do so.

Additionally, there is importance to white students having exposure to teachers of color, as researcher Gloria Ladson-Billings pointed out: “I want to suggest that there is something that may be even more important than black students having black teachers — and that is white students having black teachers! It is important for white students to encounter black people who are knowledgeable. What opportunities do white students have to see and experience black competence?”

Data such as this led the task force to consider these essential questions: What supports/resources are most critical to supporting aspiring educators? What is working well in terms of supporting Aspiring Educators of Color at the local, state and national NEA levels? What are the biggest opportunities for the NEA and its affiliates to better support AEOC?

After reviewing research and hearing from experts in the field, the task force engaged in brainstorming activities that led to some significant thoughts. During this time, the team spoke of the importance of thinking about teacher diversity as a “skywalk,” rather than a “pipeline,” issue – indicating that there may be various fluid paths that students and early career educators take in their career journeys that ultimately lead them into the classroom. Ultimately, the task force brought forward five recommendations:

- The NEA will update research and best practices with state and local affiliates, with an emphasis on listening to diverse member voices, for the purpose of advocating to both reduce barriers to teaching, and increasing union involvement. The NEA will share this information by hosting a convening of intentionally selected diverse state, local, Minority Serving Institution and community leaders to develop targeted action plans for the recruitment of potential and aspiring educators of color in their community.
- The NEA will create and roll out a data-influenced communications and outreach plan to facilitate the recruitment and support for potential and aspiring educators of color,

as well as emerging educators of color, to help them enter and succeed within the teaching profession and within the NEA's national, state and local union structures. The communications plan will target audiences both inside and outside the organization.

- The NEA will partner with Minority Serving Institutions and other organizations with an interest in educator preparation to develop

and implement policies and programs that support the recruitment and retention of potential and Aspiring Educators of Color.

- The NEA will work to support AEoC and Emerging Educators of Colors capacity to succeed both in the profession and as NEA union leaders by creating a mentoring/training program for AEoCs and EEOCs and identifying opportunities within its existing member

recruitment, engagement and professional development programs/conferences to increase the NEA's representation of — and support for — AEoC and EEOC.

- The NEA will ensure there are staff and member organizers to focus on the recruitment and support of AEs of color at MSIs into the profession and union.

## TEACHER HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES ANNOUNCED

*This article appeared in the May 2019 issue of the NEA Directors' Newsletter.*

As she does each year in May, National Teacher Hall of Fame Executive Director Carol Strickland paid a visit to NEA headquarters to introduce the NEA Board to the latest group of inductees.

Strickland was accompanied by 145 years of preK-12 classroom teaching experience from a quintet of accomplished educators. This year's honorees spanned the United States as well as areas of teaching:

- Christopher Albrecht is 23-year veteran fourth grade teacher in Brockport, New York.

- Dr. David Bosso is completing his 21st year as a high school social studies teacher at Berlin (Connecticut) High School.
- Richard Knoeppel is a 31-year CTE/ architecture teacher from Las Vegas.
- Dr. Mary Jo Murphy is a 36-year mathematics teacher from Riviera Beach, Florida.
- Dyan Smokorowski instructs preK-12 technology and innovation in Andover, Kansas.

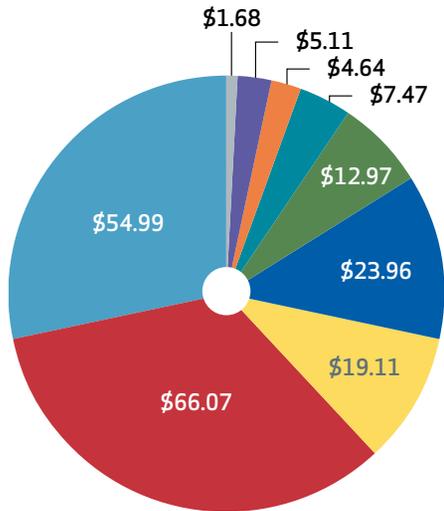
"I believe there is hope because there are teachers," Bosso told the Board. "What we do as teachers is strive to improve the human experience." Echoed Knoeppel, "I am

honored, but know there are millions of other educators who never, ever, get the recognition they deserve for trying to change the lives of children." One other educator receiving recognition was 2019 NEA ESP of the Year Matthew Powell of Mayfield, Kentucky. Powell has been on the job as a custodial supervisor, a member of the transportation team, and a night security specialist in Graves County School District's Central Elementary School.

The induction ceremony at the Hall of Fame in Emporia, Kansas, took place on June 21, 2019. For more information about the Hall of Fame and the National Memorial to Fallen Educators, visit [www.nthf.org](http://www.nthf.org).

# How Your Modified 2019–2020 Dues Dollars Are Allocated

The chart below shows how your NEA dues (\$196.00; \$119.50 ESP) are allocated to support and represent members and affiliates in their efforts to achieve NEA's mission.



No dues dollars are used to support NEA Member Benefits programs.

## Increase Educator Voice, Influence, and Professional Authority

**\$5.11 (ESP \$3.12)**

Develop and sustain effective structures, processes, and leaders to increase educator influence in decision-making at worksite, district, state, and national levels.

## Recruit and Engage New and Early Career Educators

**\$4.64 (ESP \$2.83)**

Identify, recruit, support, and engage new educators in our association, and connect them with opportunities for professional learning, leadership, and advocacy.

## Advance Racial Justice in Education

**\$7.47 (ESP \$4.56)**

Support members in advancing racial justice in education and improving conditions for students, families, and communities through awareness, capacity-building, partnership, and individual and collective action.

## Support Professional Excellence

**\$12.97 (ESP \$7.91)**

Build a system of association-convened, educator-led professional learning and supports for all educators across their career continua to ensure student success.

## Secure the Environment to Advance the Mission of the NEA and its Affiliates

**\$23.96 (ESP \$14.61)**

Use all available means, including organizing, legal, legislative, electoral, and collective action, to secure the environment necessary to protect the rights of students and educators, and the future of public education.

## Legal and Insurance Support

**\$19.11 (ESP \$11.65)**

Implement advocacy programs for members including the Unified Legal Services Program, Fidelity Bond, Association Professional Liability insurance, and a 1 million dollar per member Educators Employment Liability insurance program.

## Enhance Organizational Capacity

**\$66.07 (ESP \$40.27)**

Develop and leverage the collective organizational capacity across our association that is necessary to advance the mission of the NEA and its affiliates, with particular focus on organizing, technology, fiscal health, leadership development, and internal and external partnerships.

## Enterprise Operations

**\$54.99 (ESP \$33.53)**

Ongoing functions across the enterprise that support the strategic objectives, build lasting strength, and sustain the organizational infrastructure.

## Contingency

**\$1.68 (ESP \$1.02)**

Provide funding for emergencies at the national, state, or local levels.