

# NEA DIRECTORS'

## 2020-21 ANNUAL REPORT





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*President*

Princess R. Moss  
*Vice President*

Noel Candelaria  
*Secretary Treasurer*

Kim A. Anderson  
*Executive Director*

March 2021

## A MESSAGE TO THE 2021 MTA ANNUAL MEETING DELEGATES

*Dear MTA Delegates:*

As the 120th president of the National Education Association (NEA), I have the absolute honor to represent more than 3 million members with affiliate organizations in every state, overseas and in more than 14,000 communities across the nation. All are critical to preparing students to contribute to their communities, build successful lives for themselves and secure the future of our nation.

I believe this pandemic has deepened our commitment to students. While we are a very diverse group, we share the belief that students in our public schools — no matter where they live or their race or ethnicity or family income — should have an education that prepares them to succeed in a diverse and interdependent world.

Over the last year, educators across the nation have gone to extraordinary lengths to provide equitable options that would allow their students to continue to learn and feel supported. Educators have set up grab-and-go feeding programs to make sure they had breakfasts and lunches. Many have provided laptops or Chromebooks so students could keep learning. They have even organized car caravans through students' neighborhoods to deliver a crucial message in this uncertain time: Our school buildings have been closed, but I am still here for you!

For months, parents and educators have worried about whether or not schools will be able to reopen safely amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Through MTA's statewide "Only When It's Safe" organizing campaign and

"Campaign for Safe and Equitable Schools," members won important victories in both delaying the start of school for students by two weeks at the beginning of the year and focusing efforts on universal surveillance testing in all public schools and a demand for needed ventilation and infrastructure improvements.

I applaud MTA for increasing its professional learning opportunities so that educators can serve as the bridge to equity on racial and social justice issues. MTA members are participating in book clubs and other initiatives that are specifically focused on racial justice, antiracism and outreach to educators of color. I was honored to provide the welcome at your 2020 Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee Conference, themed "Overcoming 400 Years of Struggle ... and Still We Rise." The dialogue between MTA President Merrie Najimy and antiracism scholar Ibram X. Kendi was the highlight of the conference and an important reminder of the work ahead.

Your higher education locals accomplished a major victory through the "Massachusetts Agrees: Defend Public Higher Education" campaign when the state Legislature level-funded campuses for fiscal 2021. You have our full support as you work now to pass the *Cherish Act*, legislation that would help ensure a more adequate level of funding in the future.

Never a fair and reliable indicator of student achievement in the past, high-stakes standardized tests, after a year of unprecedented upheaval, are the last thing

students — particularly those hardest hit during the pandemic — need to recover and move forward. MTA lobbied the state to cancel the MCAS tests this year. And even though the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education insisted that testing continue, it instituted a new plan that cut the amount of testing time and reduced or eliminated the stakes attached to test results for this year. This wouldn't be possible without your passionate advocacy and expertise.

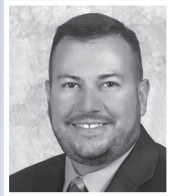
MTA, I am so proud of the work you continue to do on behalf of MTA educators and all of your students. We know that if this nation is ever going to have a racially and socially just public school system, we must wrestle with hard truths about race, access and income inequity. In order to break down the systematic, structural, and institutional barriers to opportunity, every policy, campaign and initiative must be viewed explicitly through a racial and social justice lens.

Keep up the great work, MTA, and I hope to see you soon!

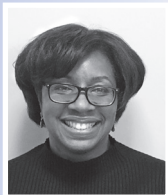
In solidarity,

Becky Pringle  
*NEA President*

## Massachusetts NEA Directors



Ryan Hoyt



Zena Link



Deborah McCarthy



Betsy Preval



Yan Yii



Candace Shivers

## A LETTER FROM YOUR MASSACHUSETTS NEA DIRECTORS

*Dear MTA Annual Meeting Delegates,*

Greetings! It gives me great pleasure to welcome you to the 2021 MTA Annual Meeting. This year has been an unusual one for your NEA Directors. In September, we held our NEA Board meeting virtually under the leadership of newly elected President Becky Pringle, Vice President Princess Moss and Secretary-Treasurer Noel Candelaria.

Our Board meeting focused on the presidential election, with an emphasis on using the NEA website as often as possible when engaging with our members. Clearly our members were engaged, because they helped to elect two great leaders and friends of public education: President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris. Your directors also participated in virtual lobby visits with the offices of Senator Elizabeth Warren, Representatives Katherine Clark, Ayanna Pressley and Jim McGovern.

In February, your NEA Directors participated in another virtual Board meeting. With a decisive presidential victory behind us, our focus was on getting President Biden's COVID-19 stimulus bill passed, immigration reform legislation passed, waivers for states in administering high-stakes standardized tests, and securing the confirmation of Dr. Miguel Cardona as the U.S. Secretary of Education.

To help achieve this goal, we held virtual lobby visits with the offices of Senator Ed Markey and Representative Jake Auchincloss.

The annual NEA Foundation Gala was held virtually this year. Awards for excellence in teaching were bestowed upon educators from across the United States. The awardees, selected by their NEA state affiliates, are educators who represent the best of their profession. Takeru Nagayoshi of New Bedford was one of the five recipients of the Horace Mann Award for Excellence in Teaching and was awarded a \$10,000 cash prize.

It has been a pleasure to serve as one of your NEA Directors for the past six years. Professor Candace Shivers will assume the role of senior director this fall, once my term ends. Thank you for all you do to support public education.

In Solidarity,

Ryan Hoyt

Senior NEA Director for Massachusetts



# ‘These challenges now are the challenges of our time’

*This article appeared in the February 2021 issue of the NEA Directors’ Newsletter*

**O**n Saturday, Marc Morial, president and CEO of the National Urban League — the nation’s largest historic civil rights and urban advocacy organization — joined the Board.

During Morial’s introduction, President Becky Pringle noted that Morial partnered with the NEA in a town hall providing “much-needed discussion about our communities and how we can advocate for reopening our schools to in-person learning safely and equitably.”

They also discussed how educators can make their voices heard in the fight to secure personal protective equipment, health protocols and funding.

Cecily Myart-Cruz, NEA Black Caucus chair, informed the Board that the National Urban League has been around for more than 110 years. It is dedicated to economic empowerment, equality and social justice in its dedication to Black people in underserved communities. She noted that the organization has published reports highlighting the issues of systemic racism that the pandemic has exposed. It has shown that we must speak truth to power for our most marginalized communities.

Morial began by describing the situation that the country has found itself in. Educators and social workers have had to completely pivot from the way

they teach and provide services to young people. Like Myart-Cruz, he noted that the pandemic brought disparities to light that existed in the nation. He shared with Board members, “These challenges now are the challenges of our time and our generation. And we can’t shirk this responsibility. We can’t step away from this essence and this duty.”

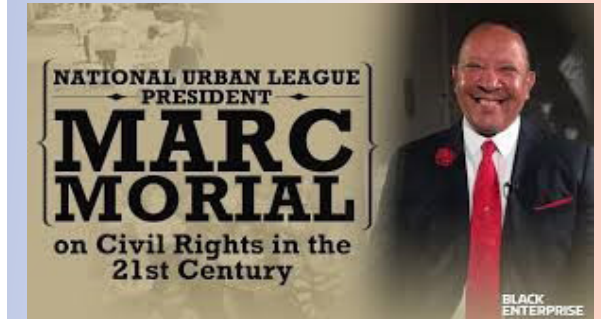
Morial discussed COVID vaccines and underscored the importance of not only making sure the vaccine is available on an equitable basis, but also acknowledging the distrust over it and providing enough legitimate information to allow people to make informed choices.

Morial reflected on George Floyd, describing the reaction of people to his death as spontaneous, real and meaningful all across the nation. Some of the outrage and energy found its way to the ballot box, and Morial said we have to meet that moment by both demanding what we believe is needed and supporting those that make proposals that we agree with.

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“We have the responsibility to help, hold accountable and recognize the difficult path ahead for the things we want,” he said, “There is no more important public job in the world than being an educator. Parents, grandparents and caregivers are entrusting the most precious thing in their lives to somebody else, to guide them, to nurture them, to carry them from infancy to womanhood, from infancy to manhood. In your profession — the profession of educators — you deserve respect and honor and adulation because your work is difficult, demanding, and it is hard.”

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*Morial’s words reflected the importance of this moment and the solidarity that will help the National Urban League, along with the NEA, create a new, more just, more equitable and more cohesive society built on our knowledge of the past and dedication to doing better in the future.*

# Board engagement: COVID-19

*Executive Committee member Hanna Vaandering and Daaiyah Bilal-Threats, special assistant to NEA's executive director and senior advisor, presented the recent Learning Beyond COVID survey. The survey reiterated our work in reclaiming public education as a common good, and it focused on six areas:*

*This article appeared in the February 2021 issue of the NEA Directors' Newsletter*

**Equity:** The COVID pandemic has compounded impacts on students with disabilities, students of color, and students with economic challenges. The role of educators in creating a just society requires changes in the content and delivery of curriculum. Content must be accessible to all and reflect the contribution of ethnic and racial minorities in society. Educators can mitigate the impact of COVID by providing equitable, quality instruction via distance learning.

## **Family and Community Engagement:**

The recovery process from the pandemic must occur both in our schools and in the surrounding community. Establishing and maintaining consistent communication with parents is critical. There was consensus around the notion that social-emotional supports are — and will continue to be — necessary for students and their families. Responses also highlighted the importance of teachers and administrators who reflect the diversity of the communities in which they work.



## **Responsibility for and Assessment of Students' Academic and Social-Emotional Learning:**

The pandemic shed light on the impact our current assessment system has on BIPOC students and students with disabilities. The goal is to build a system that focuses on equity, student academic and social-emotional learning, and provides educators with the flexibility and authority to use student learning time effectively.

The system must build trust with families and provide the appropriate data to all stakeholders. There is concern about the fairness, usefulness and appropriateness of standardized assessments. Suggestions included reimagining assessments to be authentic and to consider social-emotional learning as a component. Many suggested holistically designed district-level or classroom-based assessments closely aligned with learning standards.

**Systems Change:** The pandemic severely disrupted students' access to educational resources. An excellent public education system provides quality conditions for teaching and learning, is equitably and inclusively designed, supports resilience, addresses trauma, and has a diverse and prepared workforce. Systems change can include calendar, time, schedule or curriculum adjustments. Responses considered schedules, extended instructional time and school calendar (year-round school models, summer school, four-day classroom week), and advocated for smaller class sizes.

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## Board engagement: COVID-19

**Resources and Funding:** This includes course offerings, class size, human resourcing: tutors, counselors, nurses, ESP, classroom teachers, technology equipment, and internet access resourcing. Responses emphasized the importance of non-instructional staff in creating environments that facilitate student learning. Any extension or enhancement to the school day would require “extra hands.” Additional funding is vital to make this happen. The allocation of resources is a gateway to providing equitable access to education.

**Educator Voice/Role of Our Union:** Reimagining and transforming schools post-pandemic will require bold leadership and tough decision-making. Our communities need public schools that can powerfully serve, be inclusive of, and create a caring, respectful learning environment for every student. Our schools must fully engage students and educators in a way that supports educational

excellence, resilience, attention to student trauma. Educators must be active participants in all aspects of decision-making, including policy development and implementation. Educators need autonomy so they can do what they know is best for students. Professional respect and public perception of educators must improve. Specific actions by state affiliates can foster collaborative relationships that might prove to be key in transforming public schools after the COVID pandemic. Through collaboration and building relationships with the community and legislators, the union can elevate the voices of educators.

Bilal-Threats discussed an opportunity that the pandemic presented — a chance to look at and reimagine the educational system. “We can create working environments that rejuvenate students and replenish our educators,” declared Bilal-Threats. “This survey outlines the resources we need to do it. However, it takes more than funding for

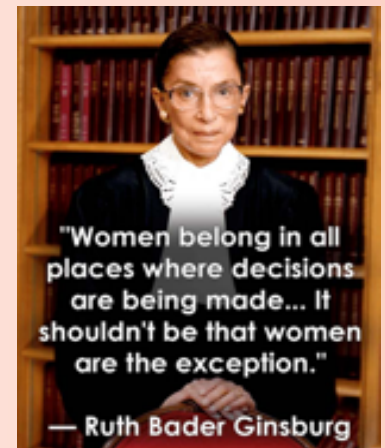
education to secure our students’ needs; it takes each of us.”

Vaandering added, “This last question is the crux of our work: What are you going to do to help your members, your locals and the NEA move to a more safe and just post-pandemic future?”

President Becky Pringle concluded the presentation with encouragement for all members: “I need you to be at those tables in your school districts. Our voices need to be at the table to say what we need to spend that money on. Nothing is more powerful than when you say specifically, ‘This is what we need; this is how much it will cost, and this is how we will make it happen over time.’ I need YOU — our practitioners, our teachers, our ESP, our higher ed — all hands on deck. I expect the NEA to LEAD on how we will bridge the gaps for our students.”

### Honor the memory of U.S. Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg by getting involved

- Sign up for racial and social justice action alerts: <https://neadjustice.org/sign-up/>
- Learn more about the NEA’s Women’s Leadership Training Program: <https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/leadership-development/womens-leadership>
- Learn more about NEA’s Minority Training Program: <https://neacsjpd.org/training-session/minority-leadership/>
- Learn more about NEA’s Leaders for Just Schools Program: <https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/leadership-development/leaders-just-schools>



# Building NEA's organizational capacity

*This article appeared in the September 2020 NEA Directors' Newsletter*

NEA Executive Director Kim Anderson reminded us how far we came in the 2019-2020 school year, including congressional hearings on the Mueller Report, elections in Kentucky, Louisiana and Washington, transitions in leadership both within NEA and in several state affiliates, post-*Janus* litigation, and living and working during a pandemic. Anderson then described how NEA remained committed to the organization's strategic objectives, focusing specifically on coronavirus help for members, affiliates, students and public education, racial justice, membership organizing and connectedness, and the upcoming election.

NEA acted swiftly to respond and provide information to members and affiliates, including town halls and reopening schools, podcasts and webinars on legal issues and requesting leave, and issuing guidance on equity for Black and brown students in the context of reopening schools. Forty Education Support Professionals participated in a yearlong Leadership Institute, where they developed an ESP Growth Continuum for affiliate staff and leaders and articulated their value to the community. Three cohorts of affiliates participated in learning about community schools and how to support blended learning. Educator Voice Academies worked on action plans for state and local work and focused on guiding the safe reopening of schools. Over 2,000 members participated in a Summer Justice Series focused on advancing racial justice in education.

Throughout all of this, NEA continued to build a culture of organizing, utilizing digital assets and programs to support new members across the NEA spectrum. Anderson then pointed Board members to the priority goals for the year. The first? "Lead a movement to reclaim public education as a common good that is the foundation of this democracy and is a racially, socially just and equitable system for EVERY student." This goal will be met by taking action to expand advocacy for structural economic and tax reform at the federal level, building on NEA's work on racial justice professional support and leadership development, scaling the community schools model, continuing the work on bargaining and advocacy for the common good and collaborations on labor management and labor-community partnerships.

The second goal, "Leading through the coronavirus, economic, racial injustice crises (always focused on our aspirational goal) with a strong, focused, unified response," will be met through ensuring that public schools and institutions of higher education protect the health, safety and civil rights of students and members, addressing racial and social justice and the needs of communities of color and other diverse or underserved populations, focusing on student learning by providing access to professional practice supports and resources to assist members, however they are teaching, strengthening the connection between NEA and its members, utilizing intentional and innovative experiments to recruit and engage members, and continue to build partnerships and a movement to support public education.

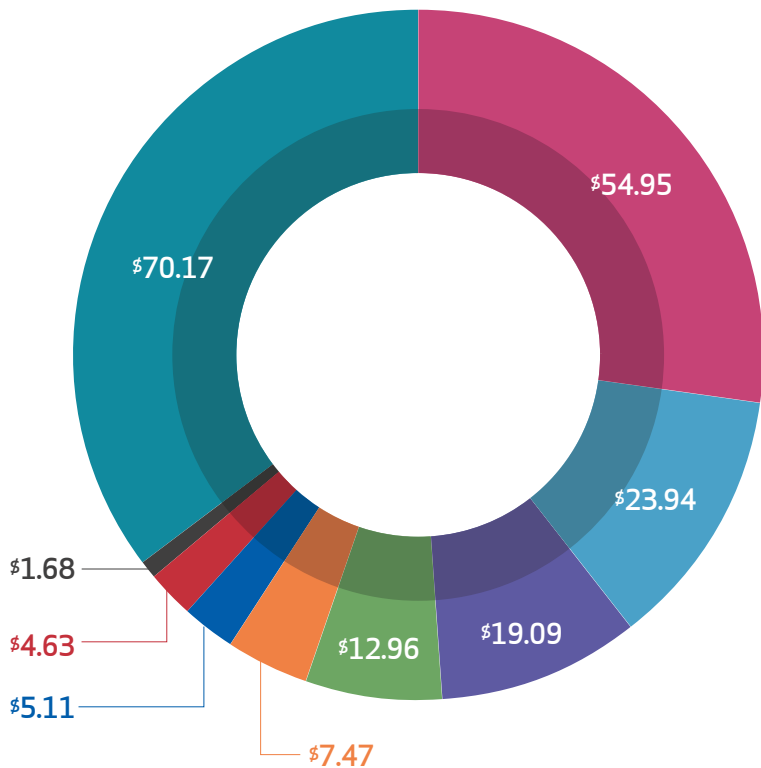
The third goal, "Election 2020." We need a new president AND pro-public-education Senate; elected leaders who care about our students, respect educators, believe public education is a common good, and understand and support the rights of workers to organize and collectively act, and will commit to taking on racial, social, education, economic justice and strengthening our democracy." This will be met through electing Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, electing a pro-public-education Senate majority, and actively engaging the administration during the transition to ensure those selected will work to advance our mission.

Each round included a presentation of one of the Strategic Priorities by an Executive Committee member and the Strategic Priority lead staff person. Each presentation focused on an overview of the Strategic Priority, a celebration of NEA's achievements over the last two years, and an outline of plans for the next two years. After each presentation, Board members were shifted into breakout rooms of four to six people to discuss key questions.

These important breakouts were a chance for Board members to engage with each other in deep conversations about the vital work of NEA as we continue to advocate for education, educators, and students during extraordinary challenges and remarkable opportunities.

# How Your 2020-2021 Dues Dollars Are Allocated

The chart below shows how your NEA dues (\$200.00; \$121.50 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 \$3.10)  
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** \$4.63 (ESP \$2.81)  
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 \$4.54)  
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** \$12.96 (ESP \$7.87)  
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** \$23.94 (ESP \$14.55)  
Use all available means, including organizing, legal, legislative, electoral, and collective action, to secure the environment necessary to protect the rights of students, educators, and the future of public education.

**Legal and Insurance Support** \$19.09 (ESP \$11.60)  
Implement advocacy programs for members, including the Unified Legal Services Program, Fidelity Bond, Association Professional Liability insurance, and a \$1 million per member Educators Employment Liability insurance program.

**Enhance Organizational Capacity** \$70.17 (ESP \$42.63)  
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** \$54.95 (ESP \$33.38)  
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.