

President's Message

"Nevertheless"

By Melanie Hameed, NEOEA President

And so it begins. The gradual decline of summer and our march towards the beginning of the new school year. The days have already begun to grow shorter, school supply commercials and materials have popped up on store shelves and on the television, and the attack on public education continues. I have read articles on the new bill that allows school districts to arm their teachers and certain states that will license persons who have served in the military to teach school. No matter how many years we serve in



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this field of education, it never ceases to amaze me how people, who know nothing about this profession, insist on making policy that impacts this profession. No one has offered to arm us with the resources we most need, i.e., time, books, paper, and the like. No one has offered to take things off our plates instead of adding to them. This doesn't happen in the field of medicine—which couldn't exist without our profession. This doesn't happen in the field of law—which couldn't exist without our profession. When did the field of education, which fuels all other fields regardless of the discipline, become the stepchild of societal acceptance?

Nevertheless, in the upcoming weeks, we will get ourselves and our districts

ready to take on another year of learning, another year of transportation, another year of feeding students' minds and bodies. We will adjust to whatever new curriculum is being introduced, and we will do it with the confidence that makes it our own. We will learn new routes and what every student who boards our buses needs. We will prepare meals that will be both satisfying and nutritious. We will do all of these things because we know that we are entrusted with the building of our communities, our schools, and our nation. We know that the journey of students is much like that of a young plant. We are the gardeners who must take them through each stage of growth, regardless of what prickly, thorny obstacles may present themselves. We must take our students from budding to blooming to bursting. We do this because we know it has to be done. We do this because we are the chosen. We do this because we are educators!

So, in these last few weeks of transitioning and prepping and preparing, do not forget that, without you at your very best, nothing can go forward. It is important that we learn to put ourselves first before we attempt to take on anything outside of ourselves. Go outside and enjoy the beautiful sun and sunsets. Go sit by a body of water and let the peace wash over you. Make some memories that will surely keep you focused in the months to come. Nothing can be impacted if we are not well-rested. Nothing can be impacted if we are not sharp. Nothing can grow in this garden if the gardener is not at his or her peak. So, colleagues and friends, do not grow weary in your well-doing. Rest and then suit up as we go into battle for ourselves, our colleagues, and our students whom we service. I wish you a grand and successful school year.

FORWARD!

Melanie



"Orange Day" at the NEA RA — and our members turned out in style! This year the RA was both in-person and virtual. More photos on page 4.



It was great to be back in person for our Summer Leadership Conference. Ship Collins (Orange TA) and Nicole Stratton (Copley TA) had a chance to catch up in between their sessions. More photos of our two-day event are on page 5.



Our Summer Leadership Conference's Wednesday evening event was at the Lake County Captains. We had time to relax, socialize, meet new friends, and catch up with old ones. We also had a chance to meet their mascot, Skipper.

Will You Be the Lucky Winner of Our Quarterly Quiz?

Hundreds of members participated in last year's "Quarterly Quiz," and they all were entered into a random draw for the grand prize: a pair of tickets to a 2023 Guardians game. Congratulations to **Karen Mierke** from Mentor Classified Employees. Congratulations also to **Carmen Link** from Ravenna EA, winner of last year's Summer "Quarterly Quiz" contest.

In each issue we'll be asking a question. We intend that the questions will be of varied kinds. (Often, this one for instance, the answer can be found in the pages of

the newsletter itself.) All the entries will be made online, and one winner will be drawn each month to receive a gift card.

Ready?

The first question this year is: **How much money can your local receive if you apply for a Public Relations Mini-Grant?**

We'll welcome all entries, but to be considered for the gift card, the winner needs to answer by Friday, October 21. To answer, go online to tinyurl.com/NEOEA-2022-09.

Thank you to all who have participated!

Communications Contest Award

The NEOEA Public Relations Committee presents a variety of awards and grants, including a Communications Contest Award. This is open to all NEOEA locals who publish a newsletter, whether paper or online. The deadline to submit is August 1 of each year. The committee then reviews the submissions and announces the awards at the Fall Rep. Assembly.

Newsletters should contain a balance of news from your local, NEOEA, OEA, and NEA, and should be published regularly. It should include all the important things happening in your local, for example,

President's update, grievance reports, fundraisers, good things going on at your sites, spotlights of members – whatever is important to members and what they need to know to be engaged in the association. And all that information the president gets from the district, state, and national organizations? The newsletter is a good place to share some of that as well! The result will be a well-informed membership and the possibility of winning an award.

Complete details about how to submit your entry are available on the NEOEA website.

Unsung Hero of the Labor Movement

Each year, the United Labor Agency recognizes a limited number of "Unsung Heroes of the Labor Movement." Unsung Heroes honored in recent years have included fifteen union activists from seven NEOEA locals.

As its name suggests, the United Labor Agency is a community service agency drawn from local community and labor organizations. It provides job skills training for workers who have lost employment due to plant closings, economic downturns, and changes in the labor market. ULA is active in Cuyahoga, Geauga, and Lake Counties and Allegheny County in Pennsylvania.

The NEOEA officers will select and submit the nominee to be honored at the ULA Annual Dinner on Friday,

November 18. The Unsung Hero and nominator attend compliments of NEOEA.

We ask that Unsung Heroes not be a person holding an elected office or in a recognized leadership position in your union.

If your local has an Unsung Hero who you feel should be honored by the ULA, please write a letter of support and send it to NEOEA Executive Assistant Linda Grunden at desk@neoea.org.

Information must be received by Friday, September 30.

There are Unsung Heroes around us all the time, and this type of honor may be of interest to locals outside the ULA service area. Perhaps your local association should consider honoring its own Unsung Hero!

Monday, September 19

Chat with Our Candidates

Friday, October 14

NEOEA Day

NEOEA Negotiations Conference

For the most up-to-date information on the NEOEA calendar, go to www.neoea.org.

Web Resources

at www.neoea.org

Click "Join NEOEA Online" button in the upper right-hand corner of the website. In order to access the membership level, you will need your MEMBERSHIP NUMBER to create a log-in. You will be able to set your own password.

- Chat with Our Candidates
- Community Involvement Grant
- Negotiations Conference
- Public Relations Mini-Grant
- Unsung Hero of the Labor Movement Award

Social Media



facebook.com/NEOEA



[neoea44124](https://www.instagram.com/neoea44124)



[@NEOEA](https://twitter.com/NEOEA)

Fun Fact

Comprising the eleven counties in northeastern Ohio, NEOEA's territory is similar in size to the state of Connecticut.

Labor Lines

I am opposed to 'right to work' legislation because it does nothing for working people, but instead gives employers the right to exploit labor.

— Eleanor Roosevelt

North Eastern Ohio Education Association
is affiliated with the
Ohio Education Association
and the
National Education Association

Melanie Hameed, President
Sue Messinger, President-elect
Rob McFee, Past President
Suzie Neff, Recording Secretary
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Address all correspondence to the NEOEA Office, 6001 Landerhaven Drive, Suite D, Mayfield Heights, OH 44124-4190. Views are not necessarily those of NEOEA, the editor, or the officers and Board of Directors.

Address e-mail for *News & Views* to desk@neoea.org.

"Wine Garden" Rights? Sign Me Up!

Good news! As a union member, you already have "Weingarten" rights! And they are owed to a fellow union member, Leura Collins, and her employer, J. Weingarten, Inc.

In June 1972, Leura Collins, a lunch-counter sales clerk, was called into her manager's office and interrogated by the manager and an undercover investigator. During questioning, Leura asked for her union steward or another union representative from her local. Her repeated requests were denied. She was exonerated of any charges. Though told to keep the matter to herself, she reported the details of the interview to her union, and an Unfair Labor Practice charge was filed.

On February 19, 1975, the U.S. Supreme Court issued their decision and ruled that an employee is entitled to union representation for investigatory interviews.

Wikipedia's article on Weingarten Rights offers the following details:

During an investigatory interview, the Supreme Court ruled that the following rules apply:

Rule 1: *The employee must make a clear request for union representation before or during the interview. The employee cannot be punished for making this request.*

Rule 2: *After the employee makes the request, the employer must choose from among three options:*


- grant the request and delay

questioning until the union representative arrives and (prior to the interview continuing) the representative has a chance to consult privately with the employee;

- deny the request and end the interview immediately; or
- give the employee a clear choice between having the interview without representation, or ending the interview.

Rule 3: *If the employer denies the request for union representation, and continues to ask questions, it commits an unfair labor practice and the employee has a right to refuse to answer. The employer may not discipline the employee for such a refusal.*

Cut out and save in your wallet.

<p>North Eastern Ohio Education Association 6001 Landerhaven Drive, Suite D Mayfield Heights, OH 44124-4190 216.518.0200 www.neoea.org; desk@neoea.org</p>		<h3>Weingarten Rights</h3>
<p>Ohio Education Association 225 E. Broad Street, Box 2550 Columbus, OH 43216-2550</p>	<p>800.282.1500 www.ohea.org</p>	<p>Read this statement to Management:</p>
<p>National Education Association 1201 16th St., NW Washington, D.C. 20036-3290</p>	<p>202.833.4000 www.nea.org</p>	<p>"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I request that my Union Representative or Officer be present at the meeting. Without union representation, I choose not to answer any questions.</p> <p>"This is my right under the 1975 U.S. Supreme Court <i>NLRB v. J. Weingarten, Inc.</i> decision."</p>

Govern Your Association as an RA Delegate

The National Education Association and its state and district affiliates are governed by democratic bodies known as Representative Assemblies. Your local association can name at least two delegates to the NEOEA RA, and at least one to the OEA RA.

OEA and NEOEA are currently certifying delegates for their RAs; NEA will start its delegate certification process in December.

Representative Assemblies consider budgets, policy statements, proposed amendments, and new business items submitted by delegates. They also elect Association officers and members of the governing boards of OEA and NEOEA.

This will be a busy year, with most electoral units experiencing elections. (To find out which electoral unit your local belongs to, go to neoea.org/files/Units.pdf.)

At its meeting on November 12, NEOEA's RA will fill vacancies for Directors representing NEOEA Unit 2, OEA/NEOEA Unit 5, and NEOEA Unit 7. Applications were due weeks ago, but nominations may be made from the floor of the Fall RA. The form is available at neoea.org/files/Nomination_Fall_2022.pdf. If you are interested in serving as a local delegate, contact an Association Representative or your local President.

Thanks and Best Wishes

NEOEA thanks the following members of our Board of Directors whose terms of service ended this summer:

- NEA ESP Director-at-large Andrea Beeman, Maple Org. Support Team
- OEA/NEOEA Unit 2 Representative Amy Butcher, Westlake TA
- OEA/NEOEA Unit 5 Representative Meaghan Coe, Warren EA
- OEA Higher Education Representative James De Monte, Lakeland Faculty Assn.
- OEA ESP Representative at-Large Matthew Hickman, Willoughby-Eastlake Class. Prof.
- NEA Director #3 Kim Richards, Cardinal EA
- NEOEA Past President Lillian Tolbert, East Cleveland EA



What We Did on Our Summer Recess

Just as school winds down in late spring, many leaders become busier with Association activities. Here's what some of your colleagues have been doing this summer. We'd like to extend our thanks to our photographers for sharing their talents with us.

NEA Annual Meeting in Chicago, Illinois, and on Chicago's First Lady Cruise



District News

NEOEA Summer Leadership — July 20-21, 2022



Our Wednesday Night Event at the Lake County Captains



Grants for Your Local Association

Free money for your members! Sounds too good to be true, doesn't it? Well, in this case, it's good, and it's true! NEOEA invites you and your local association to receive some of your NEOEA dues dollars back through our grants.

PR Mini-Grant: NEOEA's Public Relations Committee set aside \$20,000 for grants of up to \$400 to local associations. Grants can be used for a public relations project that will promote a positive image of your association within your community.



Examples of qualifying projects include: Grandparents Day, Graduation Congratulations Yard Signs, Giving Tree, or Interactive Playground. Check the website for more ideas.

Grants are awarded based on the public relations benefit to the association. Please be sure the primary purpose of the funding is to provide exposure for your association outside the school and in the community.

More details are available at neoea.org/Education-Union/Public-Relations-Mini-Grants.

Community Involvement Grant: Participation in community events offers affiliates the opportunity to enhance their visibility as vital, contributing

members of their communities. NEOEA is offering up to 25 Community Involvement Grants in 2022-23 (increased to \$200) to encourage local affiliates to become actively involved in local charitable events such as the American Cancer Society Relay for Life, Reach Out and Read, Special Olympics, or other highly-visible community charitable events. More details and the application form are available at neoea.org/Education-Union/Community-Involvement-Grants.



Recognizing Positive Public Education

Enhancing the image of public education is of vital interest to our members. Our awards highlight the accomplishments of our members and locals and recognize their positive impact on public education.

Friend of Education: This award recognizes a person and/or organization



whose leadership, actions, and support have contributed to the improvement of public education for a broad cross-section of northeastern Ohio. If a Friend of Education is selected, NEOEA RA delegates will recognize the honoree on April 22, 2023. The deadline for sub-

mitting nominations is Friday, January 20, 2023. Nominations must be signed by an NEOEA active member in good standing. More details and the nomination form are available at neoea.org/Education-Union/Friend-of-Education.

Positive Image Award: Positive Image Awards are presented to locals or members that enhance the image of members, their schools, school districts, or public education in general within the community.

Activities that are developed by members, work-related or not, that include the community are eligible for consideration. Submissions are limited to one entry per category (association or individual).

Does your project have what it takes?

An external activity or project that

includes the community and creates a positive image of your association.

Proof of your activity in public media through a newspaper article and/or photograph, TV video, radio tape, or audiotape highlighting the project.

If you can say "yes" to both of these, send a nomination letter with details of the activity to be considered for a Positive Image Award for your Association or for an individual member.



More details are available at neoea.org/Education-Union/positive-image-award.

Ohio Lottery—Partners in Education

Start your school year off right by nominating a teacher or student for the Ohio Lottery's Partners in Education program. The Partners in Education program runs every academic school year, from September to May. Anyone can nominate a deserving Ohio teacher or student through the Ohio Lottery's website. It's fast, free and easy to submit an online nomination.

For more information on the Partners

in Education program, please contact Molly Fanta, Partners in Education Program Coordinator, at 216.774.5739.

Follow the link to a video on how to nominate a teacher or student today: <https://youtu.be/uM8wtXK93W8> or <https://www.ohiolottery.com/About/Partners-in-Education>. Please spread the word about the Partners in Education program throughout your district and school community!





Five Star Awards

By the NEOEA Public Relations Committee



In 2001, NEOEA's Public Relations Committee and Executive Committee created the "Five Star Local Award" to recognize locals that promoted involvement with the Association at large – not only in your local, but also with NEOEA and OEA.

To receive the Five Star Award, a local association needs to fulfill five of the following six criteria between August and July in any given year. Winning the Five Star Award is about pride, not prize! Winners receive a certificate honoring their accomplishment, a press release for distribution to local newspapers, and a check for \$200. Winners are announced at the Fall Rep. Assembly.

However, it also benefits your local in a variety of other ways. Sending members to the Representative Assemblies, NEOEA workshops, and Leadership Council

meetings ensures more information flows to members and keeps them in the know about issues that affect them beyond their job, district, and local. It automatically gets more members involved in Association activities, not only as attendees at these various events, but also in applying for grants and contributing to OEA Fund drives. As members from your local network with others from NEOEA- and OEA-land, they are able to develop relationships with leaders and members at the district and state levels, giving your local an additional channel of support and supply of new ideas. It's a way for members to see their dues dollars at work.

Take a look at the criteria – all pretty easy to accomplish, and there is support available from leadership and other members. Hope to see your local's name on that certificate!

Criteria:

1. Send a representative to both NEOEA Representative Assemblies;
2. Send a representative to both OEA Representative Assemblies;
3. Send a member to attend at least one NEOEA workshop other than NEOEA Day;
4. Send a representative to at least half of the meetings of a Leadership Council that met at least three times;
5. Have at least 25% of its members contributing to the Ohio Fund; and
6. Submit an application for at least one of the following awards: Communications Contest, Community Involvement Grant, Positive Image Award, or Public Relations Mini-Grant.

Consumer Corner

Bright Now! Dental

Bright Now! Dental has been involved in the union community for nearly 40 years and is pleased to be providing the NEOEA an exclusive discount on general and specialty dental care (**brightnowdental.com**). Whether you have dental benefits or not, you will experience cost

savings of up to 35% on general dentistry and 30% on specialty dentistry.

This is not an insurance plan. There is no cost to participate and no restrictions. Your choice to receive dental care at one of their offices is voluntary. There are nine locations in Cleveland making access to

one of their offices convenient. Evening and weekend hours are also available.

Contact Bill Jedrzejek, Union Account Executive, directly with your questions at **bill.jedrzejek@smilebrands.com** or 440.409.5412.

Best Benefits Club

NEOEA's group buying power makes discounts possible for our members through Best Benefits Club (BBC). As an NEOEA member, you already belong to Best Benefits Club; you do not pay any dues to take advantage of BBC membership benefits.

How will I learn about BBC discounts?

Best Benefits Club does not contact individual members directly; it contacts them through their organizations. You can learn about BBC deals in several ways:

- You'll hear about some BBC deals through *News and Views*.
- The best way to learn about BBC offers is through the Best Benefits Club website, **bestbenefitsclub.com**. The BBC website contains all of the BBC deals, BBC activities, and the most up-to-date information on them. Each

discount has its own unique way of obtaining the discount, so please read the discount description carefully.

- You can sign up for the BBC weekly e-newsletter by clicking in the E-NEWS tab on the top of the BBC homepage.

How do I access Best Benefits Club discounts?

Each person must register individually with the website to access the discounts. Go to **bestbenefitsclub.com**, click on the Login tab near the top of the homepage. Click on the words REGISTER HERE and use the activation code **NEOEA0613** when filling out the small form that comes up. Users will now be required to make up their own username and password. Please enter NEOEA as your company name to avoid delay of account activation.

Due to the COVID-19 issue, most

waterpark/theme parks are not offering a discount through BBC at this time. However, Columbus Zoo, Toledo Zoo, Cleveland Zoo and Cincinnati Zoo are still offering a discount! You can find more details on zoo ticket pricing by viewing their listing on the BBC website. Please check the BBC website to determine if the offer you seek is still available. Offers are subject to change without notice. If you don't see something that was previously on their website, it may have been taken down because there is no discount available right now. There are still many great offers to be had, so please check them out!

For answers to BBC questions, you can call BBC at 330.273.5756. Their office in Brunswick is open Monday through Friday between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.

Chat with Our Candidates

Join us on Monday, September 19, to “Chat with Our Candidates” at the Woodside Event Center, 5025 Mill Road, Broadview Heights, OH 44147. NEOEA invites you and two other members of your local association to attend the candidate event. We have invited all OEA-endorsed candidates from northeastern Ohio to attend.

November’s election will impact all of our members! We are offering you an opportunity to share your experiences with public education and ask the challenging questions to the candidates.

We’ll have a buffet dinner and a cash bar for your enjoyment. Our Legislative Committee has planned an informal event for you to “chat with our candidates” at the Woodside Event Center.

Please register by Friday, September 9, 2022. To register, go to <https://vireopay.net/transact/NEOEA/Chat2022>. You will be asked for your name, local association, non-work email address, and cell phone. You will

receive an email from the registration system, and another email from us at the office confirming your registration. The week of September 12 you will receive a reminder confirmation email. Questions: Please email us at desk@neoea.org.



North Eastern Ohio Education Association
6001 Landerhaven Drive, Suite D
Mayfield Heights, OH 44124-4190

NEOEA Day is Friday, October 14. There are lots of sessions for your professional, personal, and leadership development needs. The catalog is available at neoea.org/files/ND2022.pdf.

NEOEA Negotiations Conference

Negotiations begin before you even exchange packages or shake hands with administration.



Our annual Negotiations Conference will focus on some of the other aspects to

consider as your team plans for negotiating a bargaining contract. Come join us at the annual NEOEA Negotiations Conference on Friday, October 14 (NEOEA Day) at North High School at 34041 Stevens Blvd., Eastlake.

- **Legal Update – Rachel Reight**

This session will provide information regarding legal issues facing our members and local associations, including the legislative changes that could impact working conditions.

- **Team Building for Bargaining – Jacci Johnson**

This session will not only look at how to choose your team members but how to form a more cohesive and engaged team of bargainers.

- **Clear Channels of Communication and Selling Solidarity – Katie Olmsted**

All members in your local must be on board as you plan your strategy to negotiate. This is an ongoing process which requires a plan, clear message, and member involvement.

The Negotiations Conference will provide information for all members regardless of classification. We encourage participating locals to send entire bargaining teams and negotiation committees. We have built in time for you to have your questions answered

and concerns addressed. You have a unique opportunity for your team to gather a lot of information necessary for bargaining within a short amount of time.

Registration and continental breakfast are from 8:30-9:00, and lunch is at 12:00.

Please register by Friday, October 7. To register, go to <https://vireopay.net/transact/NEOEA/Nego2022>. You will be asked for your name, local association, non-work email address, cell phone, if you will join us for breakfast, and if you will stay for lunch. You will receive an email from the registration system, and another email from us at the office confirming your registration. The week of October 10 you will receive a reminder confirmation email.