

Jordan Saves Teachers. Others? Not So Much

Bowing to pressure from parents and armed with new financial flexibility by the Legislature, Jordan School District has modified its staff reduction plans.

Originally, about 500 employees were to receive pink slips to meet a \$25 million budgetary shortfall. That group would be comprised of about half certified employees with the others coming from support staff.

Following demonstrations and picketing by school constituents and employees at Jordan worksites, the Legislature voted to allow districts the temporary use of capital funding to fill gaps in maintenance and operations funds.

This flexibility allowed Jordan to keep its teaching

force in tact without significant class size increases. However, classified employees and other support personnel still appear headed to the chopping block.

“Unless we get some serious commitments from the school board,” said Uniserv Director Bryan Sprague, “it looks like Jordan is heading toward more layoffs of classified people.”

In preparing for decisions about reductions-in-force, the district has asked a judge to interpret the meaning of its negotiated RIF language. The district would prefer that layoffs be based on seniority at each school whereas the employee groups believe the language clearly refers to service time within the district.

Newsletter of the
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REVIEW

March 2010

Legislature Revamps Retirement

The Utah Legislature voted to make massive structural changes in the way the retirement system will operate in the future. But because of a concerted grass-roots effort on the part of public employee groups, the ultimate outcome was much improved over the original proposals.

Almost four thousand people attended a rally asking the Legislature to slow down and gather more complete information before deciding to modify the system. Classified employees, teachers, police officers and other government employees made their case public with a rally on the steps of the Capitol.

The results were mixed. Some of the bills were killed and others were amended to minimize the impact on current employees, but the effort to change the system from a defined benefit to a defined plan contribution was ultimately successful.

The net effect of the changes sponsored by Senator Dan Lilienquist (R) Bountiful, probably won't be known for years because existing employees will stay on the old plan. However, new employees hired into the system and must exercise an option between two new plans.

NEA VP Eskelsen to Speak at Delegate Conference

Lily Eskelsen, formerly an elementary school teacher and UEA President, and currently the Vice President of the National Education Association, will be the featured speaker at this year's Delegate Conference.

Representatives from throughout Utah will meet to

Possible effects of beginning a defined contribution plan while maintaining the older defined benefit plan have not been studied.

Whichever plan new employees choose, the total employer contribution to their retirement is capped (for now) at 10%. That number would be subject to future changes by the Legislature for whatever reason they feel necessary.

Rally speakers made the point that effects on local communities and employers are also unknown. A large percentage of workers are drawn to public service not for the huge salaries (many would earn more in the private sector), but for long-term benefits. Employee groups believe as these benefits are diluted, it will become more and more difficult to attract the best and brightest to a life of public service.

Legislators did put some skin into the game by delaying their own preapproved daily stipend increase, but the free medical insurance they earn after ten years (a total of 450 in-session days) of service in the Legislature is still in place [UCA 49-20-404].

elect officers and conduct association business.

The annual Employee of the Year banquet will be held on Friday April 23, and the business session will be held on the next day.

Go to page 7 for Conference story.



An estimated 4,000 classified employees, teachers, police officers and state workers joined in a rally urging legislators to slow down as they try to mend an investment hole in the State Retirement System.

NEA applauds final signing of health care legislation

WASHINGTON—President Barack Obama recently signed into law historic health care reform legislation that is intended to benefit millions of Americans. The updated legislation includes improvements that will prevent the bill from being financed on the backs of working families.

NEA President Dennis Van Roekel said, “With the stroke of a pen, President Obama has put health care within reach for millions of Americans. This is not the end of the health care chapter, rather a beginning. NEA members are excited about what this means for them, the students they serve and the future of our nation. They are already contacting us with questions about how to take advantage of this historic legislation.

“Educators are eagerly awaiting the day when ailing, uninsured students do not miss school and spend the day in emergency rooms for manageable medical conditions. We know the impact of this legislation will reach beyond America’s classrooms and into the homes of millions of working families who don’t have insurance, have had coverage denied or dropped, or are struggling to pay for skyrocketing premiums.

“The 3.2 million members of NEA thank the President and members of Congress who had the courage and the vision to set our nation on a new path for health care. They did a good thing for middle class families, for public school employees and for the children we teach.”

Teamwork

A great demonstration of TEAMWORK in action was given to the Utah State Legislature on February 6th, 2010 in their own front yard, the steps of the State Capitol.



Rod Sims
President

The Utah School Employees Association had the Utah Education Association, the Utah Public Employees Association and the Fraternal Order of Police as TEAMMATES in this effort to awaken the folks on Capitol Hill with regard to our retirement.

We had thousands of participating TEAMMATES on that important day. And because of our TEAMWORK we won several of the Retirement Bills. GO TEAM!!

Who is on the USEA team?

Anybody and everybody who works in any way as an ESP with the kids. The UEA is respectfully on our team bench ready to give assistance when asked.

What is our game?

To have the best ESP's with the best working conditions so we can do the best job possible for the kids.

How do we win? With unity.

And what level of unity are we seeking? That level which has a co-worker there for you when the chips are down, even if they're from a different department. Sure!! Who says a bus driver can't be there for a custodian, or a custodian for a secretary and so forth? I see it happening all over the state. Therefore we are a winning team!

Other winning factors are strength in numbers, negotiations, friends, cooperation, and more. It all boils down to TEAMWORK.

Good job, teammates.

Just another member of the team,

ROD

Who's Driving the Cheerios Bus?

USEA wants to know what you think. Should school districts be allowed to sell advertising on school buses?

A West Jordan Representative proposed legislation that would allow school districts to sell advertising space on their school buses as a way to increase money available for district operations. Ultimately, this piece of legislation failed but we'd like to know what you think. Is advertising products or services on school buses a

good idea? Go to USEAUTAH.org and click on the button for opinion polls. We'll leave space for both yes/no answers and for commentary. If there appears to be interest, we'll publish results and maybe some of the comments in the next issue of the USEA Review.

Opinions

Members submitting opinions must sign their letters and be in good standing in their locals.

Let those with ears hear

Legislative messages

Utah newspapers have reported heavily about the messages sent by the Utah Legislature during this year's session.

Our legislators spoke loud and clear about their distrust of anything Federal, from affirmative action and health care to registration laws for firearms.

Representatives also displayed their distrust of the general electorate by passing laws neutralizing the referendum process and shortcircuiting citizen-lead ethics reforms.

It appeared that committee meetings, already allowing limited public input, were often held only to meet procedural requirements because the decisions had been reached in backroom meetings long beforehand.

There were reports of legislators walking out on hearings discussing their own proposed legislation. On some occasions, legislators even took the opportunity to browbeat citizens who had the gall to voice opinions opposed to their own.

In many ways, their behavior reminded me of a cartoon chicken (Foghorn Leghorn) from my youth. "Go away son. You bother me!"

The Legislature's message about education was also clear, but you have to connect a few dots to bring it all into focus. As a group, the Legislature seems to be in favor of education, but not educators.

They spared us from the deep cuts imposed on other areas of government. But their failure to fund 11,000 new students in the system (that's about the size of Box Elder School District) will force districts into even more cost cutting measures. These measures will inevitably have an impact on the quality of education available to our children.

A bill was passed that would allow districts to use restricted capital money, traditionally used for construction and repair projects, to fund daily operations for up to two years. However, when the money is no longer available in two years their districts will still face a funding cliff.

The Legislature's disdain for employee input was displayed with the massive overhaul to the State Retirement System that will create a two-tiered system with new hires

pushed into a seriously diluted defined contribution plan.

While supporters argued that the move was immediately necessary, there have been no studies conducted to project the impact this change will have on the state's ability to attract top-notch employees in the future.

Savings from this change will be unpredictable and only long-term because many districts aren't hiring new employees anyway.

RUBBING SALT INTO THE WOUND DEPARTMENT

In the closing hours of the session, Senator Howard Stevenson proposed that already cash strapped public school districts (529,000 students) carry more of the financial burden of charter schools within their districts. Charter schools currently enroll over 34,000 Utah students.

Because Stevenson's legislation came so late and it was such a significant funding change, Legislators voted to move it to a study committee (unlike the significant retirement changes that over 90,000 employees wanted moved to a study committee).

A cynical person might believe that in our Legislature, legislators carry more weight than citizens.

Cynical legislators might believe their ethics, morals and judgments are far superior to those of common citizens. After all, just how much can someone know who wears a flannel shirt when it's cold and drives a truck to work?

Once you're elected you learn that people who start work before 7 a.m., supply their own lunches every day, and have to pay their own speeding tickets, just aren't as gifted at problem solving as "our servants on The Hill."

Our legislative session should run from August to October. Maybe, come elections in November, we'd remember who these people really are and just what they think of us.

Let those with ears hear.
This has just got to stop.

Send contributions to:
USEA PAC
864 E. Arrowhead Lane
Murray, UT 84107.

Norbert Bensch, editor



THE LAW

BY GEOFFREY LEONARD

Recent legislative and administrative enactments make it certain that all Utah school employees will be subject to a full criminal background check within the next six years. Sometimes, these checks bring up past conduct that may be embarrassing, or worse, potential cause for a job action or termination.

All districts have policies that allow termination for cause such as "conviction of a criminal act" or "conduct that violates a state law." Thus, a district will almost certainly conduct at least a preliminary investigation into any record of possible illegal activity by its employees.

In general, a district can only terminate an employee for criminal activity if that conduct renders the employee unfit to perform their job. Factors that may bear on that determination include: potential adverse effect on students or other employees; the proximity or remoteness in time of the conduct; extenuating

Expungement: How to Deal with a Blast from Your Past

or aggravating circumstances; the likelihood that the conduct might be repeated; or motive. Thus, a recent reckless driving conviction is almost certainly cause to terminate a school bus driver, but a twenty-year-old reckless driving conviction is unlikely to be cause to terminate a secretary whose job duties do not require driving.

Arrests can be just as problematic. Even if you were acquitted, took a plea deal, or were simply in the wrong place at the wrong time, a record of arrest on suspicion of certain conduct might convince a district to investigate further. Remember, even if you were never charged, the district might conclude that the evidence shows "conduct that violates a law" and consider termination.

Clearly, if you have a conviction or arrest in your past, it is better to avoid the question altogether, if possible. Expungement is the state's recognition that for some crimes, the passage of time may justify a "clean slate." Expungement essentially removes the record of an arrest or conviction from the public record.

The Utah State courts have published the following guidelines for expungements in Utah. Note that because a conviction must be expunged in the state or court where it occurred, out-of-state convictions will have to be expunged following that state's procedure.

Utah's statute governing expungement can be found in Section 77-18-10 of the Utah Code. The

defendant will need to contact the court where the violation occurred. The steps below reflect policies in Utah. Other states may vary.

The Utah Code provides for an expungement of court and arrest records after expiration of the following time periods:

Felonies	
First-degree	Never
Second-degree forcible	Never
Conviction involving sexual acts against minor	Never
Multiple Class A misdemeanors	15 years
Multiple Class B misdemeanors	12 years
Multiple Class C misdemeanors	6 years
Alcohol or drug-related traffic offenses (Title 41)	10 years
Felony second and third degree	7 years
Class A misdemeanor	5 years
All other misdemeanors and infractions	3 years
Arrests without filing of charges	30 days
Proceedings commenced and dismissed	30 days
Acquittals	30 days

Time is computed from incarceration, parole or probation, whichever occurs last and abatement conviction from the date of arrest. The defendant can petition the court for a lower degree of crime by one degree only.

The Court Clerk can usually assist you in locating the case file or files. If there is no file found, Utah has a form which can be completed and taken to BCI. Pursuant to the

Utah State Court Records Retention Schedule, Appendix F, Utah court rules provides that criminal misdemeanors and traffic records may be destroyed once the retention schedule has been met. Microfiche is available at the court for felonies from 1969 through 1988. For cases older than 1969 you may need to check with Utah State Archives.

The petition and order form has been simplified with fill-in the blank and checkboxes for pertinent information.

Completion of the petition:

First obtain a certificate of eligibility from the Bureau of Criminal Identification (BCI) on any expungement request.

Provide all requested information to BCI and they will complete a background check which costs \$10 and issue you a certificate for \$25 fee.

Contact addresses for BCI are:
 Director of BCI
 3888 W. 5400 S.
 Taylorsville, UT 84118 -- 3549
 (801)965-4445

or

BCI.
 P.O. Box 148280
 Salt Lake City, UT 84114-8280

As always, this discussion is general in nature and is not intended to be legal advice as to a specific case. If you believe you have a claim relating to your employment, or if you have any questions about these issues, contact your local association or USEA.

Ogden Local Blankets Their Community

The School Nutrition Association of Ogden, recently completed a service project by making 75 blankets, layettes and bonnets for the SHARE program.

The mission of the SHARE Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support group is to serve

those whose lives are touched by the tragic death of a baby through early pregnancy loss, stillbirth, or in the first few months of life.

SNA of Ogden is happy to support such a worthwhile program and hopes that its efforts can bring some joy to members in their community who are faced with some of life's difficult moments.



determination



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We're proud to be affiliated with those committed to being the best at what they do, which is why we're honored to support USEA and their members.



While there were fewer education related bills in this year's session compared with previous years, public employees faced many challenges because of the state's budget position.

It's important to note that although significant changes to the retirement system were passed, the final outcome was not nearly as negative for current or future employees as it might have been.

It's also important to note two proposals that were defeated. The first would have eliminated the 1.5% 401(k) contribution made by employers. The second would have eliminated busing for secondary students living inside a three mile radius of their schools. This could have negatively affected at least 40% of bus routes in urban areas.

Here is a brief summary of some legislation that USEA members were very concerned with.

HB 42 Rep. Menlove

"School District Employees-Career Status Requirements"

This bill amends the Orderly Termination Act by allowing a district to determine how many years, between three to five years, a provisional employee must work to obtain career status. To do so, it must adopt a written policy "that specifies the circumstances under which an employee's provisional status may be extended."

Although this bill was pitched as a way to allow extra time for an employee who is "on the edge" of career status, the passed bill does not specify why the extra time may be required.

Impact and response:

Districts will have to adopt a written policy to implement this change. Local associations should make this a matter of negotiation, and negotiate policies that are very specific as to when they can be applied. Objective criteria is necessary in order to apply this bill's provisions in a fair manner.

HB 81 Rep. Allen

"School Employee Criminal Background Checks"

This bill made several changes to how background checks of school employees are done and confirms the rule adopted last year by the State Board of Education.

- New section 5(a)(i) require the releases of an individual's "full record" instead of the present "criminal convictions." This means that the person's entire record, including arrests and other incidents that do not result in a conviction, will be furnished to the employer.

- New section 5(a)(iii) requires districts to finance the costs of the database from fees for the fingerprinting.

- New section 7(b) allows the employer to require a current employee pay for the required background check.

- Section 10(a) limits rights of notice and response only to those applicants who are denied employment or those employees who are dismissed as a result of information disclosed by a background check.

Impact and response:

Districts are not required to have employees pay for background checks. Local associations should negotiate provisions that ensure that current employees are not required to pay for the checks.

Local associations should demand their districts adopt policies that ensure due process for all employees affected adversely by a background check, not just those terminated or denied employment. These policies should include rights of



HJR 3 Rep. Poulson

"Joint Resolution on Teacher Performance Pay"

This is essentially the same resolution that Rep. Poulson ran last year encouraging performance pay for teachers. She again declined USEA's suggestion to extend the scope of the resolution to include classified employees.

Impact and response:

Districts may be less willing to include classified employees in any performance pay plans because of a perception that the Legislature wants to limit performance pay to teachers. Local associations will have to negotiate participation in any performance pay programs adopted by their districts.

SB 77 Sen. Dayton

"School District Leave Policies"

This bill did not pass this year. It would have prohibited school districts from granting paid association leave and would have required that districts granting unpaid association be reimbursed for the costs of the employee on leave, including salary and benefits, of all association leave in excess of ten days.

Impact and response:

This bill will likely appear again next year. A passed bill would not affect existing arrangements for paid association leave until the next year.

Districts already should have policies governing when they will grant association leave. Local associations should review those policies and make sure that those provisions are clear and specifically note that local officers are entitled to paid leave under appropriate circumstances.

SB 42 Sen. Lijjenquist

"Retirement Eligibility Modifications"

This bill would have increased the service required for full retirement without reduction from thirty years to thirty-five years. It failed to pass.

SB 94 Sen. Lijjenquist

"Supplemental Benefit Amendments for Noncontributory Public Employees"

This bill would have eliminated the requirement that employers contribute 1 1/2 percent of salary to a members' 401(k) account.

Impact and response:

Although this bill did not pass, this is the second year this reduction has been proposed, suggesting that we will see it again when costs need to be cut. Local associations may want to consider negotiating with their individual districts for contributions to a 401(k) and may want to incorporate this provision into their negotiation proposals.

SB 43 Sen. Lijjenquist

"Post-retirement Employment Amendments"

This bill eliminates additional retirement benefits for retired persons who return to work in the retirement system. The bill applies to all retirees who return to work after July 1, 2010.

Among other things, the bill:

- Eliminates the requirement that an employer match the retirement contribution that it would otherwise have to make

notice and response to employees who are demoted, transferred, suspended, or who otherwise suffer an adverse job action because of a background check.

by contributing to the retiree employee's 401(k) account;

- Cancels the retirement allowance of a retired employee who returns to work within one year and allows them to accrue additional service credit; and

- Allows an employee who returns to work after more than one year to elect to either continue to receive a pension or to accrue additional service credit. The returning employee would not receive any additional retirement or 401(k) contribution.

Impact and response:

Districts may revise their pay policies and schedules for returning employees in order to be able to attract retirees. Local associations will have to decide what these provisions should be.

SB 94 Sen. Lijjenquist

"New Public Employees' Tier II Contributory Retirement Act"

This bill created a new retirement system for those employees who are employed for the first time after July 1, 2011.

Any public employee who has any service credit in the existing systems will not be eligible for the new system, but will continue in the system they are now in.

The new retirement system:

- limits the employer's contribution to 10% of salary;
- requires 35 years for full retirement;
- accrues benefits at one and one-half percent of salary per year;
- requires the employee to pay any required contribution above the employer's contribution.

Impact and response:

This bill may impose additional costs on employers as they will be contributing to the both the existing systems and the new system.

First Substitute HB 166 Rep. Dougall

"Reductions to Education Mandates"

This bill restricted mandated transportation of secondary school students to only those students living more than three miles from school (instead of the present two miles). USEA opposed this bill and believes is not in the best interests of Utah students. The bill did not pass.

Impact and response:

A substantial percentage of high school students rely on school buses to get to school. Those students would have to devote substantial time to walking or taking public transportation (if available) to and from school and many will simply stop attending school. Those students that are able to secure other transportation will increase traffic and pollution near schools.

Because districts will still have to send buses to pick up those students farthest away, it is likely that total bus mileage and operating time might not be reduced as much as would appear at first glance.

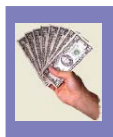
In addition, this change would result in additional reductions to pupil transportation funding for school districts and negatively impact our members.

Second Substitute HB 295 Rep. Sumsion

"Expanded Use of School District Property Tax Revenue"

This bill allows school districts the flexibility to use funding for capital projects (construction, renovations, etc.) to be used for general school district operations. This legislation is very important to school districts that are having financial challenges in their maintenance and operations (M&O) budgets.

The bill passed. USEA supported this legislation because it may save reductions to programs and staff.



An Emerging Lesson from the Lost Decade

Many investors are referring to the years 2000-2009 as the “lost decade.” And for good reason. A dollar invested in Standard & Poor’s 500 Index stocks on Dec. 31, 1999, was worth approximately 78 cents ten years later. In fact, it was the worst decade in history for U.S. equity investors, worse than the 1850s and 1930s.

In the first decade of the 21st century, the S&P 500 compounded at -1% per year, or -3.6% below inflation. By comparison, in the 1850s, it compounded at 0.5% and in the 1930s by -0.1%.

Two lessons for investors here. First, following the “hot stocks” of yesteryear is a surefire way to fail. Second, investing only in U.S. companies is no longer an option.

In 2000, the most widely recommended stocks for the coming decade were America Online, Cisco Systems, Qualcomm, MCI WorldCom, Lucent Technology and Texas Instruments, Brett Arends wrote in the Wall Street Journal.

This list merely gives us a snapshot of the popular stocks of late 1999, doesn’t it? It doesn’t say anything about how the decade might change. “Any people who invested in that portfolio have lost about two-thirds of their money,” Arends wrote. “The average stock picked at random was up 3%, including dividends.”

Arends warns investors against following the Wall Street consensus. “The most powerful and dangerous force on Wall Street is the herd instinct,” he writes. “Much of the stock-market community is still just a marketing machine that

happens to sell investments, the way, say, a drug-store like CVS sells pills.”

The second lesson is that the U.S. is losing market share in a global economy. Investing only domestically is not an option going forward.

In the U.S., the last decade began with the bursting of the Internet bubble and ended when the giant housing and credit market bubble burst. Of course, the Great Recession was a worldwide phenomenon. But the U.S. is stalled in recession and severe unemployment, hovering around 10%, whereas Asia bounced back.

For example, Australia’s unemployment rate hit a high of 5.8% in August and was down to 5.3% in January. The Australian central bank has raised interest rates 3 times, most recently to 3.75%, to put the brakes on the economy while the Fed holds the U.S. rate at around zero percent. And the U.S. economy still doesn’t grow.

Some investors argue that everything is fixed now; that the bull market will continue. Some of them say that it’s even better than that: the stock market returns 10% a year, on average, over time. Doesn’t that mean we have a lot of good news and good returns ahead of us?

Perhaps not. Not all investors lost money in the decade just ended. Three asset classes enjoyed double digit returns: emerging market bonds, 10.9% annual return, REITS, 10.2%, and emerging market stocks, 10.1%, according to data from investment research firm, Research Affiliates.

Barron’s reports that 2009’s fourth-quarter returns for 8,047 U.S. diversified equity

funds, representing \$3 trillion in assets, averaged 5.03%. The S&P 500 returned 6.04%. Not bad.

But by far the best performance was captured by emerging markets funds, up 7.59% for the quarter and 75.74% for the year according to Barron’s. Americans poured a record \$64 billion into foreign mutual funds, a little more than half of that allotted to emerging markets. There are now 514 emerging-market stock funds and 103 emerging market bonds funds.

I’m not going to suggest that you put your money into yesterday’s hot performer. But the argument for more and broader diversification is stronger than ever now. And most Americans—including institutional investors—still believe that America is the best place for their investment dollars.

Consider this: The average U.S. institutional portfolio has about 70% of assets in U.S.-based funds and 30% in international funds. Until recently, Avi Nachmany, director of research at Strategic Insight, suggested U.S. investors maintain a 50/50 U.S./foreign split. He now suggests 1/3 U.S., 1/3 overseas developed markets and 1/3 in emerging markets. Foreign investments, of course, provide dollar diversification as well as geographic diversification.

No one should run out and buy an emerging market fund tomorrow. But I think most investors should begin to examine their portfolios to see what percentage is in large U.S. company stocks. And then most of us should study how to create a more diversified portfolio.

Kentucky school bus driver wins prestigious national education award

LAS VEGAS—Helen Cottongim, a school bus driver from Florence, KY, was honored as the National Education Association’s 2010 ESP of the Year—becoming only the second from the Bluegrass State to win the prestigious education award.

America’s nearly 3 million education support professionals—more commonly known as ESPs—comprise 43 percent of the public school workforce. There are nine types of ESPs who work ‘behind the scenes’ at the country’s public schools and higher education institutions. From bus drivers and teacher’s aides to food service workers and custodians, ESPs keep schools and colleges clean, safe and healthy.

“Education support professionals are the glue who hold our public schools together,” said NEA President Dennis Van Roekel. “Without them, education in America’s public schools would come to a screeching halt. The school doors would be closed and a student’s options in life would be drastically limited. Helen Cottongim is a shining example of the ESPs who work tirelessly to make great public schools for every student.”

Cottongim is known for her compassion

and commitment to the students—most of whom have special needs—often buying hats and gloves for those who rode her school bus in the winter. As a result, she has left a profound effect on many of the students she has transported over her 36-year career.

“Helen is always the first to lend a hand to those in need—supporting food drives and homeless shelters among others,” said Sharon Oxendine, president of the Kentucky Education Association. “She never lets anyone get by with saying, ‘I’m only a bus driver’ or ‘I’m only a custodian.’ Helen is a person who is proud of what she does and believes all employees should take pride in their work—regardless of the job they do.”

The ESP of the Year award is one of the highlights of NEA’s annual ESP Conference, which is designed to provide professional development opportunities for participants to sharpen their leadership skills. As part of her honor, Cottongim will be awarded a grant that she is donating to the National Kidney Foundation, a non-profit organization of which she became an avid supporter after her son became gravely ill and had to be placed on dialysis.

As a leader, Cottongim is acutely aware and concerned about the budget cuts hampering school districts nationwide and their impact on students and families in the affected communities. For instance, conference host Las Vegas lost a staggering 550 ESP jobs when budget cuts hit in the fall. But the situation is not unique to Las Vegas. In city after city, and district after district, ESP jobs have been cut and hours reduced. Elsewhere, privatization threatens ESP jobs while threatening to force even more cuts and squeeze out vital services for students.

“Many of us would like to be retiring, but the economy just gets worse, making it harder for our members to get by,” said Cottongim. “These are the reasons that I continue to advocate for our issues.”

NEA is currently working with members of Congress to pass federal legislation that would raise awareness and recognition of ESPs to new levels. Sponsored by Rep. Dina Titus (D-Nev.) and 56 co-sponsors, H.R. 2377 would establish and administer a National ESP of the Year similar to the National Teacher of the Year.



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- Find out about tax-deferred investing
- Calculate your monthly retirement income and expenses
- Get important information about managing your money in retirement
- Download a 403(b) Toolkit

YOUR DEDICATION DRIVES OURSSM

NEA Member Benefits

VB591109

If you're not sure how to establish good credit or improve your credit profile, you're not alone. Many Americans don't realize how their spending habits affect their credit. If you've only paid cash for purchases, have no credit cards or have never repaid a loan, you don't have a record that shows you make payments on time. If you've made some late payments or missed payments, that also appears on your credit report.

Here are some things credit counselors recommend to establish good credit:

- Open a checking account in your own name, keep it balanced, and be sure not to bounce any checks.
- Apply for a credit card. Mortgage lenders usually want to see how you've handled smaller debt obligations, such as credit card balances. Experts advise having no more (or less) than two to four credit cards. By making

regular payments over a period of time, you demonstrate you are capable of repaying a debt.

- Make all payments on time. It's the single most important factor! The due date is the date your payment should be received, not the date that it should be mailed.
- Don't measure late payments by penalty fees, even if there are several days between the date your monthly payment is due and the date the creditor assesses a late fee. Your payment may be recorded as late even if a late fee isn't charged.
- If you missed any payments, catch up and stay current. Your goal is to build a long history of on-time payments. The sooner you start, the better.
- Keep balances low. The less available credit you use, the higher your credit score. So make up your mind to use only 50% of your limit on any credit card, regardless of whether you pay off

the balance each month.

- Keep your debt ratio between 20-30%. The amount you pay each month for debts such as credit cards and consumer loans should total no more than 20 to 30% of your gross monthly income.
- Don't open credit cards you don't need just to increase your available credit. This may result in a lower credit score. It's best to demonstrate responsible credit-building behavior on a few accounts, rather than having multiple accounts with little or no history.
- Realize that paying off a collection account does not remove it from your credit report. It will remain on your credit report for seven years. In addition, a closed account will also remain on your report, and may impact your credit score.
- If you've had credit problems, start rebuilding. To rees-

tablish your creditworthiness, open a few carefully-chosen new accounts, and be sure you pay them off on time, every time.

• Review your credit often. Keeping tabs on your credit report is a good way to stay ahead of the game. By seeing what lenders see and knowing what your credit rating is, you head off any potential problems quickly. Reviewing your credit report is also a good way to check that you are not a victim of identity theft.

To learn more, call the NEA Home Financing Program 1-800-632-4968 to speak with a Home Mortgage Consultant.

Remember, the benefits of the NEA Home Financing Program are extended to parents and adult children of NEA members.

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Agenda

- 7:00 a.m. Continental Breakfast
- 7:00 a.m. Registration
- 8:00 a.m. Call to Order
- Theme Presentation
- Keynote Speaker
- USEA/EMIA Scholarship Presentation
- Candidate Speeches
- Break
- Business Session
- 12:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:15 p.m. Afternoon Session
- Q & A with Lily Eskelsen
NEA Vice President
- Adoption of Program
- Legislative Review
- Ex. Dir. Report
- Pres- Elect Report
- Break
- President's Report
- Election Results
- Recognition
- Installation of Officers
- Good of the Order
- 3:25 Adjourn

Delegate Conference Starts Soon



Last year's delegates voted to study USEA's dues structure and make a report to officers at the 2010 Spring workshop.

St. George, Utah, will once again host USEA's annual Delegate Conference on April 23 and 24th, 2010.

Outstanding Employees of the Year will be honored at a banquet on Friday evening and the business session will be held on Saturday.

For the first time in many years, USEA has invited a special guest speaker to make keynote remarks on Saturday morning. Lily Eskelsen, currently serves as vice president of the National Education Association and has, for many years, been involved in the inner circles of NEA leadership. Lily is an engaging and informative speaker, who has a great respect for classified employees, and also has deep roots in Utah.

In addition to her keynote remarks, during the

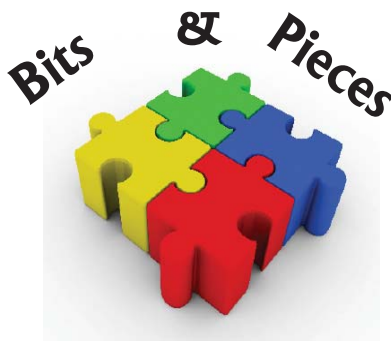
afternoon session Lily will answer questions presented by the delegates.

Although there are no resolutions presented for this year's delegates to consider, the local representatives still have the responsibility to conduct the business of the organization. This will include the election of new officers, and hearing reports from our current executive leadership about the state of the organization and other issues facing classified employees this year.

Local officers who have the responsibility of selecting delegates to the conference should have already received their registration information and Conference Agenda.



Everyone has a unique "conference survival kit." This one was left in 2009.



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2010 USEA Calendar

USEA Board Meetings
 April 23

Delegate Conference
 St. George
 April 23 - 24

SPRING AHEAD with NEA Member Benefits!

This spring, get ready for more prizes, more savings and more resources than you can imagine from NEA Member Benefits. We've put together exciting giveaways and incredible savings and resources as our way of thanking you for all the hard work you do!

SWEEPSTAKES AND GIVEAWAYS

Over \$8,000 in giveaways give you a fabulous, fresh start to the new season. All you need to do is enter online at www.neamb.com and you could be one of our lucky winners!

• Win \$1,000 toward your dream vacation! ("Spring Ahead" Travel Sweepstakes)

Pamper yourself at a fabulous resort or treat your family to a trip to Disneyland. Whatever your idea of a perfect vacation, a \$1,000 Liberty Gift card can help make your dreams come true! What's more, lucky winners will also receive a two-day car rental certificate from Alamo, valued at \$100. No purchase necessary. Five chances to win from March 1 to April 15.

Workshop Focuses Negotiating Issues



Forty-six officers representing seventeen different locals attended USEA's Leadership and Collective Bargaining Workshop on March 20.

The Legislative Report from Geoff Leonard focused on issues that may arise in collective bargaining settings later this year.

During the afternoon workshop portion of the meeting, USEA's 2010 Salary Book was discussed. Bryan Sprague and Nan Kirkpatrick then facilitated a discussion about how to evaluate various proposals both before and during negotiations.

In total, over 60 people invested a good part of their Saturday. These are the people who you should thank: Alpine - Kimberly James, Shauna Keetch; Box Elder - Kathy Kotter, Keevin Nelson, Lori Secrist;

Cache - Chrysanne Henry, Mark Rigby; Canyons - Tamara Arbon, Krystine Hancock, Lee Jennings, Laurie McKinnon, Gary Martensen; Carbon - Jenann Koss; Davis - Cliff Goble, Paula Judd, Mary Ann Nelson, Larry Phillips, Tim Wangsgaard; Duchesne - Craig Koelliker; Emery - Kerry Lake; Granite - Tony Beale, Dave Clark, Sue DeLaCruz, Boyd Kimber, Mike Memmot; Jordan - Carlene Baner, Scott Christensen, Dawna Troyer, Janet Tufts; Logan - Teri Anderson, Cheryl Brown, Tara Hawkins; Murray - Denise McDougal; Ogden; Sandy Favila, Lucy Montano, Dix Wright; Provo - Ann Davis, Susan Gurule, Jean Jones, Lisa Pulver, Mary Taylor; Uintah - Louise Bascom, Raymond Massey; Wasatch - Carol Lee Martinez, Barb Walton; Weber - Teena Wallace.

I've Got Mine - Senator Greiner Withdraws Candidacy Following Hatch Act Problems

Utah State Senator Jon Greiner (R) Ogden, has announced that he would not seek re-election to his position in this fall's election.

In addition to his Senatorial duties, Greiner is currently the Chief of Police in Ogden. A situation many people believe creates a violation of the Hatch Act.

Greiner retired from the Ogden

force and was rehired. He now draws a pension in addition to his \$107,000 salary. This "double dipper," could have voted against the massive changes to Utah's retirement system, but failed to attend the committee meeting that sent the measures to the full Senate for a vote.

Members Vie for Seats on USEA Executive Board

Delegates at this year's Conference will have the opportunity to elect several members to the State Executive Board.

The Board consists of ten area representatives along with a President and President-elect.

Candidates for office this year have expressed an interest in fulfilling the duties of the Executive Board and meet all of the qualifications established in the USEA Bylaws.

Area 1

Jerad Reay - Box Elder
 Reed Yonk - Cache

Area 4

Phyllis Huntsman - Canyons
 Barbara Milne - Canyons
 Kathi Naegle - Canyons

Area 7

Valerie Hopper - Sevier

Area 10

Marie Leonard - Carbon

USEA appreciates all the fine members who have served, and are willing to serve, as members of the Executive Board. They dedicate many hours to the continued success of our organization.

Davis Member Named to URS Membership Council

Lori Todd, a USEA member from the Davis Educational Support Professionals Association, has been named to serve on the URS Membership Advisory Council.

Members of the Council speak for the interests of active and retired members and participating employers.

USEA Officers & Staff

PRESIDENT Rod Sims	PRESIDENT-ELECT Roger Pate
EXECUTIVE BOARD	
Reed Yonk	Area 1
Dave Shaw	Area 2
Mitch McMillan	Area 3
Jerad Reay	Area 4
Chris Marchbanks	Area 5
Sharon Bills	Area 6
Valerie Hopper	Area 7
Jeff Olsen	Area 8
Marilyn Twitchell	Area 9
Marie Leonard	Area 10
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Mike Hepner	
DEPUTY DIRECTOR Mike Christensen	
UNISERV DIRECTORS Norbert Bensch Nan Kirkpatrick Bryan Sprague	
STAFF ATTORNEY Geoffrey Leonard	
SECRETARIES Wendi Kestler Blaire Percifield	
OFFICE ASSISTANT Audrey Christensen	
NEA BOARD of DIRECTORS Ryan Anderson Jesse DeHay	
USEA review EDITOR Norbert Bensch	