

NEBRASKA PRINCIPAL ELECTED NATIONAL PRESIDENT



Stark

I believe that opportunities come along often in our lives, and we just need to determine the right time, place and situation to take advantage of that particular opportunity," said Barry Stark,

recalling his entry into the principalship. Now another opportunity has come along for Stark, who was selected at NASSP's Annual Business meeting to be the 2007-08 NASSP president.

Stark is no stranger to leadership positions, having served as a middle level principal and assistant principal form more than 30 years and as president of the Nebraska Association of Secondary School Principals in 2001. He is currently a member of the NASSP Steering Committee and has served on the NASSP Board as the middle level at-large member since 2002. Barry has been the principal at Norris Middle School in Firth, NE, since 1997 and has been a member of NASSP since 1973.

Stark believes in providing a level playing field for all students, wheather it is "providing necessary flexibility in the No Child Left Behind Act for assessing special education students or finding programs (with Perkins) that will assist those students who are looking into vocational and technical fields after high school."

The new president-elect intends to continue NASSP's advocacy efforts and

(continued on page 12)

NCSA Announces New President-Elects-Elects

Affiliate members elected their president-elects for the new school year 2006-2007. These administrators will officially begin their duties on the NCSA Executive Board after September 1, 2006. Congratulations and welcome:



Osgood



Street



Van Horn



Habben



Wragge

From left: NSASSP - John Osgood, Principal, C.L. Jones Middle School; NASES - John Street, Director of Student Services, Grand Island Public Schools; NASBO - Dennis Van Horn, Associate Superintendent, Lincoln Public Schools; NASA - John Habben, Superintendent, Falls City Public Schools; NAESP - Mark Wragge, Principal, Fillmore Central Elementary School 

REFLECTIONS OF A RETIREE

by Dave Swartz, Ed.D., President, Nebraska Association of Retired School Administrators



Swartz

One of the opportunities an affiliate president has is to be asked to write an article for *NCSA Today*. As I considered ideas that might be of interest to NCSA members, I decided to give my

thoughts on three topics, one or two might strike a chord with *NCSA Today* readers.

NARSA Membership

A recent count indicates that membership in the Nebraska Association of Retired School Administrators (NARSA) is 456, currently the largest of the NCSA affiliate associations. I believe the rapid growth of the NARSA group is an indication that many Nebraska administrators want to stay involved in education and in

their professional organizations following retirement. We feel that we have something to contribute and wish to put to good use the knowledge and experience acquired over decades of public school service. Fortunately, NCSA leadership

(continued on page 2)

INSIDE...

Position Papers on Education provided by Political Candidates 4-10

The mission of the Nebraska Council of School Administrators (NCSA) is to be an effective leader for quality education and to enhance the professionalism of its members.



REFLECTIONS OF A RETIREE

(continued from page 1)

agrees and has allowed a NARSA member to serve on many of the NCSA planning committees. The latest of these actions involves permitting a NARSA member to serve as a non-voting member of the Educators Health Alliance (EHA) Board. I feel this is an important decision because health insurance, especially the availability of health insurance for retired members, is oftentimes the critical issue in an administrator's decision whether to retire. All of us who have served on these committees are appreciative to NCSA staff and affiliate leadership for allowing this to happen. As President of NARSA for only a few months, I have become acquainted with many retired administrators representing all affiliates of NCSA. The following quotations seem, in my view, to accurately describe the philosophy of many of these retirees:

"Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young. The greatest thing in life is to keep your mind young." -- Henry Ford

Live as if you were to die tomorrow. Learn as if you were to live forever. -- Mahatma Gandhi

He who dares to teach must never cease to learn. -- Richard Henry Dann

Professionalism Exhibited

In January 2006, I participated in an important meeting of the NCSA Legislative Committee as a one-day substitute for NARSA member Paul Toms. The Legislative Committee consists of nineteen members who represent all NCSA affiliate associations including NARSA as well as having invited a representative from the State Department of Education. The potential for different points of view, therefore, is anticipated.

Added to the mix this year were several bills related to the "One City, One School District" resolution passed by the Omaha Public Schools Board of Education. During the daylong meeting, there were ample opportunities for committee members, many of which represented the metro area schools as well as OPS, to enter into an emotional debate regarding the boundary issues. I was highly impressed to see this did not occur and, in fact, the professional attitude and behavior exhibited by these administrators during several extremely tense situations. It was gratifying to see these administrators "take the high road" during discussion of each of the bills that had been introduced. First, they kept the interests of children uppermost in their minds while deciding whether or not to support a particular bill, and second, it was apparent they are truly committed to the quality of education in Nebraska. It was impressive to see how well our Legislative Committee and NCSA staff work together and how open the committee members were to many diverse viewpoints. The functioning of the NCSA Legislative Committee pointed out two things to me: The umbrella structure of NCSA is a valuable component in the quality of education in Nebraska and NCSA is comprised of many of the most qualified and highly professional educators one could find anywhere.

Retirement Benefits

"An Analysis of the Attitudes of Nebraska Teachers Toward Three Early Retirement Incentive Programs." The year was 1981 and the above happens to be the title of my doctoral dissertation. Little did I suspect at that time the level of involvement I would have in retired administrator activities many years later following my own retirement. While reviewing sections of that document, it was interesting to note that twenty-five years later prospective retirees are faced with the same concerns and questions while trying to make the major decision to retire. As a sidebar, while reflecting on the months I spent researching for and writing my dissertation, I thought about the technology available to today's students at all levels from, elementary and secondary to college and beyond. A comput-

(continued on page 12)

NCSA EXECUTIVE BOARD 2005-2006

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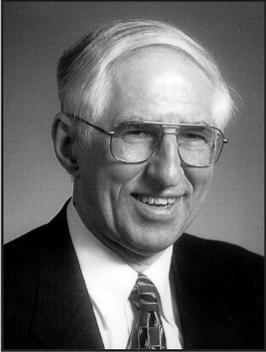
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The opinions expressed in this newsletter or by its authors do not necessarily reflect the positions of the Nebraska Council of School Administrators.

PERSPECTIVES

by Jerry Sellentin, Ph.D., Executive Director



Sellentin

RELATIONSHIPS

The past two weeks have been most interesting, to say the least. The Educator's Health Alliance (EHA) Board of Directors reported to members a resolution, passed at its meeting March 13, that cash in lieu of EHA health insurance would not be allowed after September 1, 2008. The concern is that adverse selection is occurring in 47 percent of school districts which allow cash in lieu of health insurance. Adverse selection will increase in the future with projected retirement of administrators and teachers.

The resolution was passed to look at the concern of adverse selection, to find solutions to this problem and set a time line for resolving the issue. The resolution is not binding. Granted, the EHA

Board could have done a better job of clarifying why there is a concern and what are examples of cash in lieu that cause adverse selection.

Letters, e-mails, and discussion I have received are legitimate concerns and have caused administrators and teachers frustration and differences of opinion. As in all relationships, clarity and purpose of communication is most important.

A good relationship also requires establishing trust. Trust that is framed with an understanding that change can be challenging. The EHA Board needs to provide more information as to why this change is needed and to listen to concerns and solutions for school districts prior to making any changes regarding cash in lieu of health insurance. More study of the concern and data to support the concern is being obtained and will help in finding solutions to resolve the

problem. If this issue is not corrected, in my opinion it could impact the future of the EHA Health Insurance plan.

Every aspect of being an administrator is about building relationships. It is my hope that the relationships with school districts and the EHA Board will result in positive relationships in solving a major concern impacting the future of the EHA Health Insurance Plan. It is my understanding from Nebraska Superintendents who have come from Kansas that allowing cash in lieu of health insurance resulted in the failure of the Kansas health care plan for educators.

Relationships to education as location is to real estate. It is my belief that relationships exist today so that we CAN get through this difficult issue of resolving the cash in lieu issue of health insurance.

Executive Director's Comments

Recognizing the importance of the 2006 Primary Election and the "relationships" with the candidates NCSA asked each candidate for a 1000 word position paper on education.

NCSA has a policy of not endorsing political candidates.

NCSA appreciates very much the following position papers received and hopes it helps members in casting their vote on May 9, 2006.

*(*Don Stenberg declined to provide a position paper.)*



Position Paper on Education

DAVID HAHN

Democrat Candidate for Governor

"Only the educated are free."
Epictetus

The Greek philosopher, once a slave, reminds us of the central role of education to our individual and collective life.

Education provides freedom from ignorance, fear, and poverty.

Education gives us freedom to create a meaningful life, explore new vistas for ourselves and our families, and bestow a healthy and sound society on future generations.

As governor, I will commit myself to education. This means that schools must have a sufficient and consistent budget to carry out all the tasks placed on our schools by our constitution, laws, and regulations. One reason I decided to seek the governorship was to provide sufficient and sound funding for our schools. Since the day I have announced,

I have commented that the politically-motivated call for "tax relief" would place our schools in jeopardy of inadequate funding. I know that it is difficult to plan, and more difficult to manage, any enterprise when resources are lacking and not consistent. The effect of unsteady funding is most severely visited on schools; making it difficult to plan, hire,

and retain quality staff and maintain excellence in the school.

Since December, I have visited several schools, spoken with numerous administrators, teachers, and students. One thing stands out to me. Our schools are doing an excellent job; but under increasing pressure of limited budgets and heightened expectations. As governor, I would work closely with the Commissioner of Education, The Department of Education, and voluntary associations such as the NCSA to make Nebraska schools the finest in the nation.

My three children all attended public school in Nebraska and now each is continuing with higher education in Nebraska. My oldest son is a young adult with autism. Alex benefited from early childhood programs, committed and caring teachers, administrators, and staff throughout his years on the public school system. I have participated in many IEP meetings, always grateful for the education and resources provided for my son.

It is important for you to understand the positions to which I am committed and for which I will:

- Promote the Essential Education Initiative.

- Commit my time and resources to an equitable, adequate, and consistent funding for education; including a continuing commitment to children with special needs and children from low-income families.

- Take action to reduce reliance on local property tax for major funding of our schools. We must eliminate the yo-yo funding of education over the past several years.

As you each guide your schools through each school year; dealing with curriculum, instruction, standards, assessment, testing, and accountability; you must know that the governor is fully committed to the enterprise of education and will be an advocate for your important role. I will be that governor.





Position Paper on Education **GOVERNOR DAVE HEINEMAN**

Republican Candidate for Governor

From the first day I took over as Governor in January 2005, I have said that two pillars would be keys for our future – education and economic vitality of Nebraska. Many of you already know the priority I place on education. I have vigorously engaged the Governor's Office in many different educational discussions because of the state's prominent role in education funding and education policymaking.

Education is the great equalizer, and every child, regardless of race, creed or socioeconomic background, deserves access to quality education. In this global information-age economy, we cannot afford to have two Nebraskas – one where some children are prepared for the future and others are not. We must always strive to include as many perspectives and as many opportunities for our state's students as we can reasonably afford, and I know that is a goal school administrators share.

I understand and appreciate education. I received a quality education in several Nebraska small towns, as my father worked for JC Penney Co. I also had the rare opportunity to attend the United States Military Academy at West Point, where the values of academic rigor and personal investment in education were reinforced. My wife, Sally Ganem, has

been an elementary school teacher and administrator for the entirety of her career. We care deeply about education.

As Governor, I have placed a high priority on meeting with educational leaders, including administrators and teachers across our state. These experiences are why I fully funded state aid to education and why I support increased funding for special education and early childhood education. We all recognize the importance of closing the achievement gap, and we are trying to help schools address those challenges. The priority I place on education is also why I have supported distance education and also why I care about continued cross-boundary cooperation. I support local control, and I fundamentally oppose unfunded mandates.

I recognize the challenges that each of you face because my family and I have lived them. Districts all across Nebraska are facing disparate challenges, ranging from declining enrollments and funding to concentrations of poverty and English Language Learners, as well as the ever-increasing need for special services and special needs education. We all understand the fiscal reality of finite resources. However, under my watch, we will make difficult, prioritized spending decisions based on what is best for

our entire state, and I can assure you that education holds a prominent place in my priorities.

On the involvement side, I plan to pursue goals of increasing the academic rigor of our schools and of doing more to make parental involvement in a child's education more accessible to non-traditional families and to families with non-traditional schedules. I will continue working with the P-16 Commission to ensure that we do all we can to enrich the high school experience and better coordinate our efforts from preschool to the workforce.

Your input is always valued in my office. I believe that you and your teachers are critical to Nebraska's future. Only by embracing education can any state achieve greatness. That is why our state is such a wonderful place to live, to work, and to raise a family. We have always worked well together, and that is why we will continue our march toward better days. I am the only person in this race who discusses education as a lynchpin of his administration, and I would appreciate your support and your vote on May 9th. 



Position Paper on Education

DAVE NABITY

Republican Candidate for Governor

Dave Nabity is running for governor of the state of Nebraska. There are many reasons, but one of the most important is his concern about the future of the education system and its link to the state's economy. He has seen education from the viewpoint of a parent and a financial advisor to his clients. Dave and his wife Kim have six children and have had their children in three different school systems, both public and private. Dave says he is determined to use his expertise from the business and financial sector to operate Nebraska's educational system as efficiently as possible, while making sure our children get the best education possible. Because of all the chaos in Nebraska today regarding school districts, the various issues affecting our schools, teachers, administrators and students have become paramount in Dave's campaign. In this article, he will share his ideas about education, and tell you why he would like your vote.

Not long ago, I drafted a letter to my fellow parents in the Millard school district, and shared my views of the Omaha Public Schools consolidation efforts. I was against it for two reasons. First, I was not convinced that it would have improved education for the children involved. Second, there was no mention of efficiencies and potential property tax relief. I offered an alternative proposal that allowed the eight suburban school districts to take over the responsibility of managing 23 of the challenging schools from OPS, leaving them with a more balanced district, both in student learning abilities and racially. The suburban leaders were initially happy about my idea, but they later decided to dig in and protect their boundary instead. This is unfortunate, because it exposed that they were really not interested in solving the problem OPS is having. This whole saga is proof that we need leadership from the governor, not just the legislature, to help design a better system for educating our students.

Nebraska is badly in need of a new leader who will immerse himself in the

problems we are having and work to design new solutions that are provided to the legislature. Not the other way around, as our current governor is operating. It will require a real leader who is objective and can balance the needs of the children, educational leaders and taxpayers. It will take someone with the courage to engage all parties and work toward new solutions, even if they are controversial.

We need to redesign Nebraska's educational system for the sake of students, parents and teachers who deserve the best system possible. Nebraskans in school administration also deserve less red tape and an easier system to manage.

Here are some of the most important education issues I believe we have to address:

School Size

In a recent study, Deloitte Research and the Reason Foundation concluded that the most optimum student body size is between three and 6,000 students. The larger the school district, the more inefficient it can become. We need to be mindful that the creation of super-sized districts might not improve quality and could result in higher operating costs.

Efficiency of Small Schools

I believe we must accommodate smaller schools in our system, as long as they are efficient. If they are not efficient as-is, we need to provide options to help them become more efficient—especially rural schools that are quite a long distance from larger K – 12 schools.

To help smaller schools become more efficient, we should look at sharing arrangements that lower the schools' operating costs and distance learning through new technologies. If these strategies do not work, we might need to consider the option of privatizing the school and allowing for a per-student subsidy to follow the child. If the parents are forced into having to pay tuition to keep the schools local, I believe they should receive a tuition tax credit to help offset

their out-of-pocket costs.

Modernize and Streamline

Throughout my campaign, you will hear the words "modernize" and "streamline" over and over—not only in regard to education, but also in other areas where government has become bloated. We've been operating at status quo for so many years, many of our systems are outdated.

To keep spending from continuing to increase at twice the rate of inflation, we must eliminate needless duplication and redundancy in our education system and reduce excessive mandates that keep teachers from teaching. We need to look for ways to streamline administration, so we operate more efficiently and more money ends up in the classroom. The savings should then be used to reduce property taxes. High property and motor vehicle taxes are two of the key reasons retirees leave Nebraska. We must reverse this trend. It's a matter of long-term economic survival.

Education Money Allocation

My goal is to make sure 70% of all dollars allocated to education ends up in the classroom. This is similar to European schools, which operate with 60% to 80% ending up in the classroom. I am hopeful that this goal can be accomplished by modernizing and streamlining the system statewide.

Parent Choices

Parents must have choices. It is the American way. It is critical that we allow parents to have a say in the way their kids are educated. School choice should not, however, come at any cost. The choices and options must be efficient for taxpayers and provide a high standard of learning.

Long Term Outlook

For the long term, I'd like to see a system with decentralized local control and management that uses shared services models for transportation, special educa-

(continued on page 12)



Position Paper on Education **CONGRESSMAN TOM OSBORNE**

Republican Candidate for Governor

Our state has excellent people and a good quality of life. But we also have weaknesses that are preventing us from performing at a level of excellence. Excellence is not easy to achieve, I know from experience that you need the right resources, the right people, the right vision and the right leadership. That's why I'm running for Governor.

My six years in Congress have been rewarding and we've had the opportunity to make a difference in a number of important ways. As a member of the Education committee I was able to amend the No Child Left Behind Act to include mentoring, and secured \$134 million in 2002-2005 for mentoring nationally and an additional \$49.3 million in 2006 with \$1.5 million for Nebraska schools and communities. We also succeeded with an amendment to provide federal funds to small school districts under the Rural Education Achievement Program (REAP) which provides more than \$7.11 million annually to rural Nebraska schools. As Vice Chairman of the subcommittee on Education Reform I voted in favor of the School Readiness Act that strengthens the federal Head Start program and hosted conferences in Hasting, Kearney and North Platte for educators interested in obtaining grant funds for their school. While this is important work, I believe that as Nebraska's next Governor I can make an even more effective contribution and work to help prepare the entire state of Nebraska for success over the long term.

An essential element of my vision for excellence will be providing every child a world class education that allows them to succeed in the 21st century world

economy. I will work with State and local boards of education, legislators, teachers, administrators and parents to ensure this happens. Providing every child access to a high quality education is not just a moral obligation, it is essential to our state's social and economic prosperity.

Investing in education strengthens our people and our economy.

An important part of making that vision work is ensuring our schools have the equitable and adequate resources needed to provide competitive salaries, an expansive curriculum and technology to support the curriculum. There must also be appropriate programs for special needs children, including mentoring, and outreach programs to ensure parents are involved in their children's education.

The social cost of substance abuse, and the family and community destruction that results, will also be key areas of focus in my vision for Nebraska. There is no single answer to this challenge. However, I would like to see the education establishment as an essential partner in ensuring that our children know the dangers of substance abuse and the importance of making the right choices at an early age. As a Congressman I have worked with teachers and administrators to get this message to students in the Third District and I would like to see this effort expanded statewide. As Governor I would continue to devote resources toward helping children and families overcome the detrimental and destructive effects of drug and alcohol abuse.

I recognize that the job of a school or school district administrator is varied and difficult. Many school systems face tremendous challenges with limited resources. Nebraska taxpayers support their public schools and I do not, and would not, support vouchers or any other program that might take public tax dollars away from the important mission of public education.

Nebraska students rank in the top ten nationwide. Even so we have students that are facing special challenges and the expense to educate these students can be a serious cause for concern for many smaller, as well as larger districts. I think it is important to develop funding policies that will provide the resources districts need and still allow them to remain flexible to adapt to their unique needs.

I know these goals will be difficult but I will make funding for education a top priority. I spent more than 30 years as an educator, and my wife Nancy was a teacher, and we know there is no better investment in Nebraska's future than an investment in education.

I am willing to make the tough decisions necessary, and create the coalitions, that will lead to statewide excellence in education. And I am willing to serve two terms as Governor, should the public allow, and ensure we make a great start in my vision for national excellence for Nebraska's future. 



Position Paper on Education

DAVID KRAMER

Republican Candidate for United States Senate

My name is David Kramer and I am a Republican Candidate for United States Senate. I believe I bring unique experiences to this race for U.S. Senate when it comes to the issue of education, particularly since I have spent twelve of the past fifteen years with Baird Holm Law Firm where I have practiced many of facets of school law.

Education in general and public education in particular is critically important to our long-term success as a nation. I base this belief on my experiences as the son of parents whose most prized gift was the opportunity for a good education. I have also had the opportunity to live and work in countries where governments have used education as a weapon instead of a tool. Education gives individuals the ability to access information. Information, used properly, can lead to knowledge. Knowledge is power. Power is the ability to question and challenge. I believe it is our duty as citizens to constantly question and challenge those who govern us.

One of the great ironies of Washington's approach to education today is that it seeks to legislate equality of result instead of equality of opportunity. There is a difference between equali-

ty of opportunity and equality of result. What each child does with the opportunity is up to that child. Our education system cannot be "one size fits all", but must take into account many things – availability of resources, student economic status, student background. That is why I would have voted against No Child Left Behind.

So what, then, should the role of the Federal Government be in education? I believe that the federal role in education should focus on using its funding ability, primarily through the use of block grants, to create equality of opportunity. First, Congress must make good on its commitments, including fully-funding its portion of IDEA. Second, rather than merely reauthorizing old programs, Congress should incorporate additional flexibility in the education spending to enable reform-minded state leaders to administer program funds as they see best to raise achievement. Narrowly focused programs create cumbersome application processes, wasting time and money that could be directed to classroom learning. Third, federal rules and regulations are cumbersome and detract states and localities from the primary task of educating students. The federal government runs more than

100 programs for K-12 education, each with a separate application process. A few opportunities for limited consolidation of applications have emerged, but much more needs to be done to streamline and consolidate federal programs as well as their application processes. Fourth, I do not believe lack of money is the problem. Increased funding has not led to increased achievement. Over the past three decades, per-pupil education spending has doubled, but test scores have remained stagnant. The real problem is a broken education system that prevents resources from getting to teachers and students. As much as 40 cents on the dollar may be lost between Washington and the classroom. We need to fix that by making sure more dollars reach the classroom, by streamlining federal education programs, and by giving parents more education choices.

As Senator I will take the lead in demanding that our education system serve all America's children, rural or urban, rich or poor, black, white or brown. Every child should have the same opportunity as the next to live the American dream, a dream that originates in a quality education. 



Position Paper on Education **U.S. SENATOR BEN NELSON**

Democrat Candidate for United States Senate

As a graduate of Nebraska public schools, and a parent and grandparent, and as a former Governor, I know firsthand what a Nebraska education can mean. My priority as Nebraska's Senator is to maintain local control of our schools and ensure that our educators have the resources they need to succeed.

When I was Governor I established the Nebraska 2000 program to link students, teachers, and families with the private sector and local, state, and federal government resources so Nebraska children could have access to more education resources. During my Administration, the Nebraska State Board of Education adopted Nebraska's first set of academic standards for reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. I also created the Education Innovation Fund to help local school districts fund technology-related programs and other improvements. I worked to put computers and internet access in every classroom to promote distance learning so that Nebraskans can access the courses they need no matter where they live.

When I came to the Senate one of the first votes I cast was against the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) act. While well intended, NCLB diminishes one of the cornerstones of our education system; local control. Nebraskans should decide how to educate their children and measure their success and I was concerned that NCLB would weaken local control over education and become an unfunded federal mandate that would waste millions of Nebraska taxpayer dollars on administrative fees. Unfortunately, that is exactly what has happened.

I strongly endorse accountability and excellence in education, but I do not feel the one size fits all approach of No Child Left Behind is good for states like Nebraska that already have an effective and successful accountability process in place. No Child Left Behind is up for reauthorization next year and I intend to work to make the act more flexible for

states like Nebraska that are already providing the quality education our children deserve.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a critical component for the education of all of our children. As Governor, I fought with the federal government to live up to its responsibility to help states meet the goals of this program. Today, IDEA remains an underfunded federal mandate. I continue to push the federal government to meet its obligation to fund 40% of the IDEA. Right now, the federal government funds less than 18% of IDEA. As a result, local school budgets are strained as they are left with making up the difference, and that is not acceptable. I will continue to fight to hold the federal government accountable until they meet their commitment of 40% full funding.

I believe that all of society benefits when our citizens are educated. As a result, I am concerned that a voucher system would divert much needed funding away from our public schools, where the majority of America's children are educated. A better option for the country would be to follow Nebraska's example of "Public School Choice," a system in which students are allowed to transfer to other public schools. This option has worked well in Nebraska and in other jurisdictions. In addition, this system has the advantage of keeping taxpayer dollars in our public schools.

Indeed, the public education system needs improvement, but I believe local jurisdictions are in the best position to determine what works best for their school children. I support local control and believe the role of the federal government should be limited to "junior partner."

In President Bush's FY07 budget proposal, he has again advocated a true private school voucher system where students in poor performing public school districts can receive assistance in transferring to a private school. The budget suggests allocating \$100 million to that end in FY07. Congress has routinely turned down such proposals, and I con-

tinue to believe that scarce federal resources should first be spent on public education and not a private school voucher system.

Another critical piece of education is investing in the future of education for our children. I am a cosponsor of legislation to make permanent the 529 college savings provisions contained in the 2001 tax package. The 2001 tax cut contained provisions that help encourage savings in 529 plans, most notably, withdrawals from 529 savings plans for qualified higher education expenses are now tax free. These provisions will expire in 2010, and this legislation will make the 529 plan provisions permanent. Over the past decade, college tuition and fees have increased by 59% at 4-year public institutions and by 42% at 4-year private institutions. As a result, we must help families save for the future education of our children.

The "savings power" of a 529 plan is derived from its various tax-favored aspects. Under federal income tax rules, individuals can make after-tax contributions into 529 plans, have earnings grow tax-free, and withdraw amounts tax-free if used for a beneficiary's qualified higher education expenses.

In the Senate I have supported teacher quality grant programs that will help schools recruit, hire, and train teachers, and help them reduce class sizes. I have also fought to provide tax breaks to help teachers with out-of-pocket classroom expenses. I cosponsored legislation to increase the tax deduction for teachers who spend their own money on supplies for their classrooms from \$250 to \$500. I voted to implement the original tax deduction for our teachers in 2001. I applaud our teachers who are willing to use their own money to enhance the experience of their students in the classroom.

I know that if Nebraska is to prosper in generations ahead, we must make education one of our top priorities. I did this as Governor of Nebraska and continue to do so as Nebraska's Senator.





Position Paper on Education

PETE RICKETTS

Republican Candidate for Governor

A quality education is one of the foundational elements of any child's life. I am a product of our Nebraska public school system and I understand the importance of education to society, our economy and our understanding of the world. Every child in America should have the opportunity to receive an excellent education. As a candidate for United States Senate, I understand that educators, parents, and students face many challenges in our school systems. If elected I will support:

- The promotion of local control over public schools;
- Reform for No Child Left Behind (NCLB).

The Promotion of Local Control Over Public Schools

Local control is the key to strong public schools. Our national bureaucracy has weighed heavily on standardized testing. I support Nebraska's localized testing system and believe it should be an option for schools across the United

States. Decisions should be made by the people living within local school districts and I will work for legislation that implements these types of reforms. Education, for the most part, should not be a federal issue. Our education system should allow academic and curriculum decisions to be made at the local level, actively engage parents in the learning process, and help ensure that schools remain free of drugs, alcohol and violence.

Reform for No Child Left Behind

I believe that we should hold our schools and teachers accountable for educating our children. If you can't measure something, you can't manage it. However, an unfunded federal mandate like No Child Left Behind (NCLB) takes us down the path of federal control of our schools; we should set the standards for our teachers and schools locally. This will allow us to implement customized common sense practices to accommodate local situations. I am pleased that Nebraska has implement-

ed NCLB in a unique way and I would support legislation like the State and Local Education Flexibility Act. Legislation like this allows school administrators to take into account students facing extraordinary circumstances when calculating yearly progress and high school graduation rates. We must measure student achievement to ensure our children are learning. Those measurements should be decided by our local school boards, our principals, teachers and parents.

As the father of three young children, I know nothing is more important than the future of our children. Education is an issue that affects all Nebraskans and the future of our country. I hope to work with you to promote its continued success. 

CONGRATULATIONS TO...

☞ **Sterling Public Schools** on the success of their levy over-ride election

☞ **Fort Calhoun Public Schools** on the success of their levy over-ride election

☞ **Eutis-Farnam Public Schools** on the success of their levy over-ride election

☞ **Elmwood-Murdock Public Schools** on the success of their levy over-ride election

☞ **Michelle Suarez**, Assistant Principal, Calvert Elementary (LPS), appointed by Governor Heineman to the Nebraska Education Leadership Council

☞ **Randy Butcher**, Superintendent, Bridgeport Public Schools, appointed by Governor Heineman to the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission

☞ **Kirby Eltiste**, Millard Public Schools, reappointed by Governor Heineman to the Nebraska Professional Practices Commission

☞ **Steve Joekel**, Millard West High School, recognized as the 2006 Outstanding Athletics Director

☞ **Carolyn Winchester**, Superintendent, Loup City Public Schools, on the publication of her article, "Sharing Superintendents" in the American Association of School Administrators magazine, "The School Administrator"

☞ **Dave Hamm**, Superintendent, Niobrara Public Schools, named Superintendent, Plainview Public Schools

☞ **Steve Schneider**, Superintendent, Arlington Public Schools, named Superintendent, Auburn Public Schools

☞ **Todd Porter**, Counselor, Fremont Public Schools, named Superintendent, McPherson County High School

☞ **Jeff Hoelsing**, High School Principal, Nebraska Unified #1, named Superintendent, Mullen Public Schools

☞ **Troy Unzicker**, High School Principal, Mitchell Public Schools, named Superintendent, Kimball Public Schools

☞ **Michael McCable**, Catholic Schools Superintendent, named Super-

intendent, Ansley/Arcadia

☞ **Margaret Sandoz**, High School Principal, Niobrara Public Schools, named Administrator Niobrara Public Schools

☞ **Cory Grint**, Principal, Southwest High School, named High School Principal, Sargent High School

☞ **Brian Tonniges**, Principal, Fillmore Central, named Principal, York Middle School

☞ **William Curry**, Teacher, Lincoln Public Schools, named Shelby High School Principal

☞ **Chad Jensen**, named Assistant Principal, Logan View High School

☞ **Ken Kujath** named Principal, Broken Bow High School

☞ **John Holys**, Teacher, Elkhorn Public Schools, named Oakland Craig Elementary Principal

☞ **Mark Strite**, Sidney Elementary Principal, named Elementary Principal Kearney Public Schools

☞ **James Widdifield**, Principal, Cedar Rapids, named Elementary Principal Gothenburg Public Schools

☞ **Cory Hall**, Teacher, Louisville Public Schools, named Elementary Principal, Louisville Public Schools

☞ **Bret Schroder**, Teacher, Lincoln Public Schools, named Elementary Principal Crete Public Schools

☞ **Todd Rhodes**, Principal, Sidney High School, named Assistant Principal North Platte High School

☞ **Mike Sanne**, Co-Superintendent, West Boyde Unified, named Principal at Clearwater

Retirements:

☞ **Jerry Bexten**, Principal, Central High School, Omaha Public Schools

☞ **John Brickner**, Superintendent, Ewing Public Schools

☞ **Tom Rother**, Superintendent, Raymond Public Schools

☞ **Mary Drew**, Elementary Principal, Westside Community Schools

UPCOMING EVENTS...

April 10
Educational Office Personnel
Holiday Inn - Kearney

April 13
New Superintendents Workshop
NCSA - Lincoln

April 26-28
NASBO/NASES State Convention
Midtown Holiday Inn - Grand Island

May 23
NARSA Event
Lincoln, NE

For more information on any of these conferences or to register online please visit www.ncsa.org

SYMPATHY

☞ **Lynn Johnson**, Principal, Arlington High School, on the death of her father

Log on to
www.ncsa.org
for all information
relating to
Nebraska Council
of School
Administrators





NE PRINCIPAL ELECTED...

(continued from page 1)

work to improve the U.S. education system. "NASSP must continue to be the preeminent voice and advocate for the secondary principals," Stark said. "We must develop new services and benefits to attract aspiring principals and make membership in NASSP valuable and meaningful for them." 

DAVE NABITY

(continued from page 6)

tion, facilities management, food service, human resources, procurement, information technologies and administration. I want to provide leadership for the long term to set the standard of efficiency in the way we operate our educational system.

Property Tax Relief

Finally, I'd like to see less pressure on property taxes by creating new sales tax revenue through expanded tourism and recreation, which can cover a great deal of the costs of educating our children over the long haul.

Those are the main points in my education platform for the upcoming election. The most important thing you need to know about me as an education candidate is that I will be very open to suggestions and ideas from the professionals who are working in education today.

For the common good of all Nebraska citizens, it is time to rethink the way we deliver education in this state. We need to ask ourselves the question, "If we are not already managing education in Nebraska this way, would we do it this way if we could start fresh?" I hope to bring fresh new ideas and a creative outlook to the issues of education in Nebraska, as well as the strong leadership we need to move us to brighter days in the future.

For more information about Dave Nability, his family, his business and his stands on the issues, visit www.davenability.com. To share your personal stories about the ways state government has stood in the way of your family's or business' prosperity, visit www.FixNebraskaNow.com. 

REFLECTIONS OF A RETIREE

(continued from page 2)

er and word processing would have been a lifesaver when I was working on graduate degrees. I remember every time Dr. Cale Hudson, my UNL doctoral advisor would "recommend" a change, I would not only make that change but retype, via IBM Selectric, the dozen or so pages following that change because of the effect it had on footnotes and pagination. Today, that process would require at most thirty minutes time.

I retired in 1998 at the age of 60 and have had eight years participating in and benefiting from the Nebraska School Employees Retirement System. From my experience and after visiting with retirees from many other professions, I feel very fortunate to have been an educator in Nebraska for thirty-seven years. It is my belief that our defined benefits retirement plan is exceptional and we should expend whatever time and energy necessary to protect it. Every day in the media we read and hear about another significant employer changing or eliminating its retirement program leaving prospective retirees with a very dim view of the future. Many of these workers are forced to continue working long after they had planned to retire either because of greatly reduced retirement income or the increasing cost of health insurance benefits.

Of some interest to prospective retirees might be a brief summary of my retirement income from the Nebraska School Retirement Plan, excluding Social

Security benefits and other investment income. Readers in my age group will remember the years when our total contribution into the State retirement plan was our choice of either \$120 or \$180 per year. It wasn't until 1967 that Nebraska educators had an indexed retirement plan similar in structure to our current plan. My initial retirement check in 1998 was fifty-six per cent of my gross monthly check during my last year of school employment. My benefits were reduced because of the retirement option I chose which will provide my spouse the same retirement benefits I receive should my death precede hers. Within forty months following retirement, I had already received benefits equaling the sum of my thirty-seven years of contributions plus interest and now, after ninety months of retirement, my benefits total nearly two and one half times the sum of my contributions into the plan. Recent retirees have also benefited from six annual cost of living adjustments (COLAs) which began in July 2000.

Advocacy

As you may suspect from reading the above, I try to be a strong advocate in three areas: 1) To solicit retired administrators to join and become actively involved in NARSA activities; 2) To promote professional behavior among all NCSA members; and 3) To engage in activities which will maintain and improve where feasible the state retirement plan for Nebraska educators. 

WANTED...

Interim Superintendent - Arlington Public Schools

Due to professional advancement, the Arlington School District is seeking candidates for the position of interim superintendent for the 2006-07 school year, with an approximate start date of July 1st. Arlington Public Schools, located in the greater Omaha metropolitan area, provides outstanding educational services to 600 students.

Please send a letter of application and credentials to Pam Carter, Educational Service Unit #3, 6949 South 110 Street, Omaha, NE 68128, prior to April 17, 2006. For additional information, contact Dr. Gil Kettelhut at 402.597.4802.

Assistant Principal - High School - Columbus Public Schools

Please apply on line at www.columbuspublicschools.org
Human Resources - Columbus Public Schools - PO Box 947 - Columbus, NE 68602 or e-mail kleisch@esu7.org for more information.



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Calendar of Events

APRIL

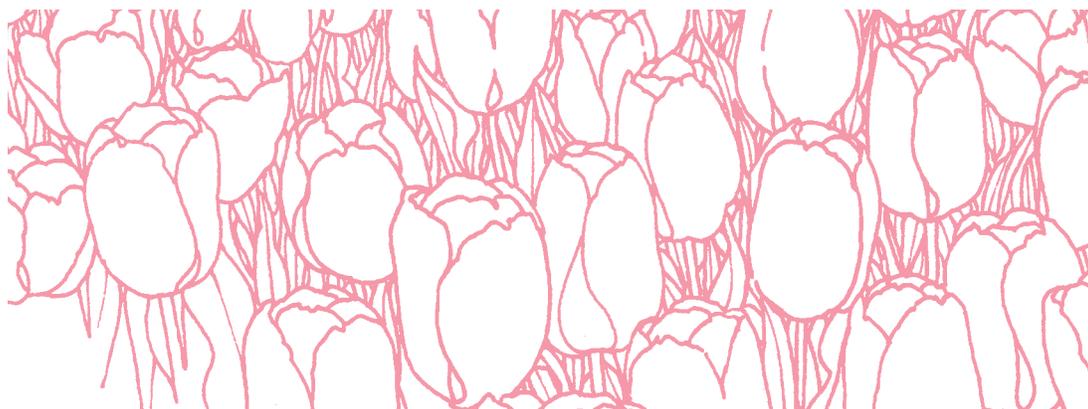
10	Educational Office Personnel	9:00 a.m.	Holiday Inn	Kearney
12	NASES Region I	9:30 a.m.	Norris Public Schools-Board Rm.	Firth
12	NASA Region I	4:00 p.m.	York Country Club	York
13	New Superintendent Workshop	9:30 a.m.	NCSA	Lincoln
18	New Principals Workshop	9:00 a.m.	NCSA	Lincoln
19	NSASSP Region IV	1:30 p.m.	ESU #10	Kearney
19	NCSA Executive Board	8:30 a.m.	NCSA	Lincoln
21	NASES Region II	8:30 a.m.	Gretna	Gretna
24	NSASSP Executive Board	10:00 a.m.	Holiday Inn	Kearney
25	NAESP Region IV	12:00 p.m.	Drew Heady's House	Hastings
26-28	NASES/NASBO State Conference		Midtown Holiday Inn	Grand Island
26	NSASSP Region III	5:00 p.m.	Eldorado Hills Country Club	Norfolk
26	NAESP Region III	6:00 p.m.	Eldorado Hills Country Club	Norfolk
26	NAESP Region II	5:30 p.m.	Henry Doorly Zoo	Omaha
26	NSASSP Region I	5:30 p.m.	Evening with Friends	Milligan

MAY

12	NASES Region III	12:00 p.m.	Sports Denn	Norfolk
19	NASES Region II	8:30 a.m.	Bellevue Public Schools	Bellevue
31	NAESP Region II	5:30 p.m.	Jerico's	Omaha

NATIONAL CONVENTIONS

- April 6-9, 2006 - CASE/CEC National Convention - Salt Lake City, UT
- October 13-16, 2006 - ASBO natioanl Convention - Pittsburgh, PA
- February 23-25, 2007 - NASSP National Convention - Las Vegas, NV
- March 1-4, 2007 - AASA National Convention - New Orleans, LA
- March 29-April 2, 2007 - NAESP National Convention - Seattle, WA



The NAEESP Link

The State Association Newsletter for Elementary School Principals
April/May, 2006



Attitude is Everything

JoEtta Brown, Region V President

It is that time of year when everyone appears to be suffering from stress. The stress of completing those last few evaluations, the paper work involved in all of our required reports, prioritizing year end requisition requests, setting dates for interviews for new hires and preparing for the end of year of activities as well looking ahead to changes and plans for the upcoming school year. Getting through all this will certainly depend on my attitude.

As I reflect on what I have accomplished or not accomplished I look not only at student scores but how my staff helped the student achieve those scores. What did we do right? What can we do better? Any accomplishments I have achieved or my staff have achieved have been based on the attitude we have carried into each task. Making a difference in a child's life is increasingly more difficult. We no longer have the "Leave It To Beaver—Ward Cleaver" families. Student priorities may not be the math or phonics lesson. His or her focus may be food on the table or a place to sleep at night. I applaud my teachers for their understanding, compassion and caring attitude to deal with these societal changes and still get the math lesson taught. Their attitude is one I admire because of the increasing pressure due to standards, reporting, NCLB and all the other state and federal mandates that daily affect their teaching and the child in their classroom. My teachers never give up on the child; they work even harder to find ways to move that child along dedicating hours beyond the required 'teacher day'. It is their attitude that makes each day a positive place for students to want to be, even if the math lesson is not quite complete. Their never say die attitude, their what else can I so attitude, their it's all about the student attitude—that is what keeps me involved and engaged.

Some days my plate is so full, it is difficult to take time when 'nature call'. On those days I have learned to monitor my intake—sure helps with the output! Do I want to do this again? Yes, a thousand times yes! It is not about the pay check or the title on the door but what my actions may mean in the life of a child. The success that is achieved seems to always come back to that positive attitude. So as the school year draws to a close keeping an attitude that keeps the focus on children keeps us moving along. It is how we look at each situation, each class, and each day. Keep your attitude positive and these next few weeks will fly. I firmly believe we accomplished our goals and achieved success because we tackled everything with a positive attitude. Tackle each day like this young woman does!

ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING

*there once was a woman who woke up one morning, looked in the mirror, and noticed she had only three hairs on her head.
"Well," she said, "I think I'll braid my hair today." So she did and she had a wonderful day.*

*The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and saw that she had only two hairs on her head.
"H-M-M, " she said, "I think I'll part my hair down the middle today."
So she did and she had a grand day.*

*The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that she had only one hair on her head.
"Well," she said, "Today I'm going to wear my hair in a pony tail." So she did and she had a fun, fun day.*

*The next day she woke up, looked in the mirror and noticed that there wasn't a single hair on her head.
"YEAH!" she exclaimed, "I don't have to fix my hair today!"*

Attitude is everything

Region Notes

Region I

The 2006 Region I Spring Celebration will be held on Wednesday, April 26, from 6:00-8:00 PM, at the Nebraska Club (20th floor of Union Bank) at 255 South 13th Street in Lincoln. April 26th is Secretary's Day SO... Bring your school secretary and your spouse/guest to this celebration! Our speaker will be William Kloefkorn / Nebraska State Poet, who will share humorous and inspirational thoughts about life in Nebraska! Cost - \$16.00 per person, RSVP number attending to Wendy Bonaiuto @ wbonaiu@lps.org

Region III

Region III Principals met at the Lifelong Learning Center in Norfolk on Wednesday, February 1, 2006. A round table discussion was held with ESU 1, 8, and 7 staff developers invited and present. Topics of the discussion included: the possibility of future coordination of services with ESU's to provide administrative inservice at Region III Principal meetings, Staff development ideas, LB126, Retention Policies/Alternatives, Walk Through Evaluations, Formative Evaluations, Summative Evaluations, Dibels, Video use research, Learning Communities, and After School Programs. Administrators shared information both orally as well as provided handouts for each other to take home and use. In addition, National Blue Ribbon School Recipients, Julie Curry and Jo Roberts, Jefferson Elementary Principals were recognized. Bill Kenagy addressed the group, too, about the New Principal Mentor Program. The next Region III gathering will be the Spring Social to be held on April 26th at Eldorado Hills Country Club in Norfolk. Be Rudloff, Region III President.

Region IV

Region IV met on January 25 for the winter meeting. It was held at ESU#10 in Kearney in conjunction with the Aspiring Principals workshop. We had close to 20 aspiring principals in attendance. Jerry Sellentin and Susan Anglemeyer attended as well. Our next meeting will be in Hastings at Drew Heady's house with lunch provided by the Hastings Principals. Election of officers for the 2006-07 year will be voted on. Nancy Brosomle from Kearney was selected to represent Region IV as our Distinguished Principal for 2006-07. Cathy Cafferty, Region IV President

Region V

Region V has elected new officers for the 06-07 school year and had our final meeting in Sidney.

Josie Floyd--Sutherland Elementary	President
Barb Edwards--Longfellow Elementary Scottsbluff	President Elect
Rob Alderson--Mary Lynch Elementary Kimball	Secretary Treasurer

Bill Kenagy presented information to principals about the progress of the Principal Liaison program and did a presentation on Positive Leadership. Dan Chromy, high school principal at Ogallala updated members on federal results of NCLB and gave a presentation on Cyber Bullying.

There were 25 members in attendance. Retirees from the elementary include:

Roger Stockall--Hershey
Brian Horst--North Platte Lincoln Elementary
LaRita VanBoskirk--Morrill Elementary

Plaques were given to each to recognize their years of service in education.



NAESP Executive Board

President, Susan Anglemeyer
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Secretary, Mary Derby
Federal Relations Coordinator, Steve Wilson
Region II President, Larry Wade
Region IV President, Cathy Cafferty
NARSA Representative, Ruthelen Sittler
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Region III President, Be Rudloff
Region V President, JoEtta Brown
Ex-Officio Board Member, Jerry Sellentin
Public Relations Coordinator, Mark Murphy

NOMINATIONS BEING SOUGHT FOR NEBRASKA COUNCIL OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

The purpose of the NCSA Distinguished Service Award is to honor individuals who have rendered outstanding and unselfish service to the Nebraska Council of School Administrators and who have contributed significantly to quality education at the state and local level.

CRITERIA

- * YEARS OF NCSA SERVICE: Minimum of Five Consecutive Years
- * Active Member of NCSA at Time of Nomination
- * Significant Achievement in Promoting NCSA Goals and Activities
- * Acknowledged as a Leader at Local and State Levels

A committee composed of the past presidents of affiliate organizations will review all nominations and determine the award winner. Since the element of surprise is deemed an important aspect of the award, self-promotion or campaigning is discouraged.

Resume Summary of Nominee

Name: _____

Present Position: _____

Educational Background:

Professional Position(s) Held:

NCSA Activities/Committees/Offices:

Professional Organizations:

Significant Awards & Achievements at Local & State (National, if applicable) Level:

Attach a brief statement on why you think the nominee deserves the award.

Nomination submitted by: _____

Return by June 5, 2006 to: NCSA * 455 South 11 Street, Suite A * Lincoln, NE 68508-2105.

30 YEARS OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

Many people have contributed their time and efforts to the betterment of education. The following have stood out from the crowd, thereby qualifying themselves for the prestigious **NCSA Distinguished Service Award**.

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1971	O. W. Kopp	1988	Norbert Schuerman
1973	Fred Wilhelms	1989	William Gogan
1973	Melvin Olson	1989	Edward Johnson
1973	Walter Beggs	1989	Larry Vontz, NDE
1974	Jerry Warner, Senator	1990	Ron Withem, Senator
1975	Barney Gyger	1990	Jim Brisson
1976	Ben Burke	1990	Ken Bird
1976	Bill Bogar	1991	Ward Sybouts
1977	Owen Knutzen	1991	Elmer Murman
1977	Lloyd Sexton	1991	Pat Beckenhauer
1977	Gerald Koch, Senator	1992	Mark Alderman
1978	Frank Lewis, Senator	1992	Jim Ossian
1978	Rosalie Farley	1993	Ron Oswald
1979	Paul Kennedy	1994	JackHallstrom
1979	Cliff Dale	1995	Ron Joekel
1979	Anne Campbell	1996	Ron Witt
1980	Don Stroh	1996	Walt Thompson
1980	Jim Tangdall	1997	Jody Isernhagen
1980	John Prasch	1997	Larry Dlugosh
1980	Loren Brakenhoff	1998	Tom Osborne
1981	Paul Basler	1998	Gerald Ehlers
1981	Irvin Yaffe, School Board	1999	Vandle Phillips
1981	John Deegan	2000	Bob Whitehouse
1983	Ed Kelley	2001	Gary Schmucker
1983	Larry Bradley	2002	Marshall Adams
1984	Dick Triplett	2002	Richard Schoonover
1984	Gerald Bryant	2003	Gary Oxley
1984	Curt Olson	2003	James O'Hanlon
1984	Les George	2004	Doug Christensen
1985	Fred Bellum	2004	Polly Feis
1985	John Lammel	2005	Ken Nelson
1985	Keith Hughes		
1986	Paul Baker		
1986	Bob Peterson		
1987	Dave Swartz		