

Report from National Chair Davina Keiser

Fall greetings to all, welcome to our new members, and welcome back to those continuing. So much has happened since we met together last summer at the NEA Representative Assembly in Chicago. Several weeks ago, with the current school year well underway, your Executive Officers and Regional Directors held a teleconference to discuss some of the challenges we all are experiencing, including issues regarding layoffs, legislation affecting education (both nationally and statewide), and more. The week following the RA, the NEA held its 5th Republican Leaders Conference in Washington, D.C. Over 140 NEA Republicans participated in three days of workshops, brainstorming sessions, networking, and lobbying on Capitol Hill. Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee was truly honored to be the recipient of our NEA Republican Educators Caucus third annual Randy Moody Friend of Education Award, which was presented to him in his Capitol Hill office by several of our Caucus officers and members. Last month, several members from our California Teachers Association Republican Caucus and I attended the CA GOP Fall Convention in Los Angeles. Presidential candidates Ron Paul and Michelle Bachmann were among the featured speakers. The Caucus met for breakfast on Saturday morning to strategize on how best to “cover” the hearings, forums, and workshops scheduled throughout the convention. The Honorable Michelle Park Steele, Vice-Chair of the California State Board of Equalization from District 3, and the highest-ranking elected Republican in the state of California, invited me to participate in the Asian Leaders Forum. The message that resounded throughout was that the Republican Party needs to be more inclusive and “reach out” to the members of the Asian communities because their values align with those of the Party. That same message, only with a focus on the Hispanic community was at the forefront of the Hispanic Forum held earlier this month in my hometown of Long Beach, California. We all need to ask ourselves how we, as individuals and as a collective body, can be more inclusive of those whose values align with ours, regardless of race, socio-economic status, or age, especially our young voters, since they are the future. As teachers and education support personnel, we often underestimate the power we have in our communities. There is much to be done, but I am hopeful that we can “grow” the Party if we all work together. In closing, I want to remind you that next August, 2012, we plan to have a presence at the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida. It would be great to have a contingent of our Caucus members there. If you’re planning to attend your NEA Regional Conference, please let both your Regional Director and me, your Chair know so that we can be sure to connect with you. Should you have any questions or wish to share something with the Caucus, you may contact me via telephone at (562) 338-3018, or by email at davinakeiser@yahoo.com. I look forward to hearing from you. If not before, I’ll see you at the RA 2012 in Washington, D.C. Take care, have a wonderful school year, and don’t forget to get involved in your local Republican activities today; tomorrow may be too late.

NEA-REC 2011-2012

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Davina Keiser- CA

Vice-Chair

Kathy Gann- KS

Recording Secretary

Neil Wilson- CA

Corresponding Secretary

Jerome Hoynes- IL

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David Kinsella- VA

Midwest

E-Ben Grisby- WI

Northeast

Laura Bochner- NJ

Pacific

Ron Edwards- CA
(NEA Board of Directors)

Southeast

Michele Bowman- TN

Western

David Gould- OK

TRUNK TALK

Editor- Jerome Hoynes

News from Northeast Chair Laura Bochner

The hot news for New Jerseyans is the possible run for the Presidency by Governor Chris Christie. Initially saying he would not run, he was recently invited to the Reagan Library to speak and received overwhelming support. Government workers in the State of New Jersey are hoping that he will make the move. Upset about the recent changes to the pension and benefit system initiated by the New Jersey Legislature, and supported by the Governor, the New Jersey Education Association has just filed a multi-faceted lawsuit along with other government worker unions to fight these changes. Only time will tell the outcome of the lawsuit and the Governor of New Jersey.

The Northeast Regional Chair, Laura Bochner, is asking for input from states in the Northeast as to what is going on in their states. Please e-mail her at yankeelover4@verizon.net.

Words from Recording Secretary Neil Wilson

Living in the San Francisco Bay Area has been interesting to start the year. This region is currently experiencing the hiring of Superintendents in six schools in the City of San Jose alone! This change in district leadership is definitely going to have an impact in the area and could eventually change negotiation strategies as they go forward. My own district has a Superintendent that's been present for the past three years; however, he will be retiring at the end of the school year and leading to another hiring.

Sunshine State Republican Educators group shining bright according to Florida Caucus President Sandra Ross

We will be having our Annual FEA-REC meeting at the Florida Delegate Assembly on Thursday-October 27th, 2011(6-7:30pm). It will be held at the Rosen Centre Hotel off International Drive, In Orlando, Florida. This year we have a couple of very important guests that have indicated they will attend our meeting: Florida State Senator David Simmons and FEA's Head Government Relations Representative Jeff Wright. We will be presenting Senator Simmons a "Friend of Education" award for his efforts with last year's legislative session in regards to some key legislation he was trying to help us amend. Jeff Wright has begun to initiate efforts with our Caucus members to work to improve public education through a bi-partisan effort, which is why he has volunteered to attend our Annual REC meeting. Additionally, we invited Florida Senator Paula Dockery to receive the "Friend of Education" award as well, but as of yet have not received a confirmation from her office regarding her attendance at our meeting. We are continuing to fight for Public Education by working with our State & Local Legislators to increase positive education legislation.

Western Regional Chair David Gould visits Cape Town, South Africa for Education International's World Congress

Please visit the link listed below this article to read the nice article that appeared in the Oklahoma Education Association's magazine featuring NEA-REC Western Region Chair David Gould who attended the Education International World Congress in Cape Town, South Africa, during July 2011.

The page 4 headline reads: "Making global contacts highlights trip to World Congress"

<http://okea.org/assets/files/2011%20Oct%20%20Nov%20Focus.pdf#page=6>

Message from the Mid-Atlantic Chair David Kinsella

It was a pleasure to meet with over 150 delegates in July at the NEA Headquarters in Washington, DC for the RLC V! The Mid-Atlantic was well represented and I had a chance to hear from most of the states. I look forward to seeing new people at the RLC VI in 2012!

The highlight of RLC V was traveling to Capitol Hill in order to hear Senator Lisa Murkowski address our group. Senator Murkowski spoke at length at the height of the budget crisis. She was very concerned that the government would no longer be able to pay our troops. Luckily the budget crisis was averted. Senator Murkowski honored the NEA-REC by taking the time to meet us in the middle of a national crisis.

We have a very tight race in 2012 for the United States Senate in Virginia and I urge my entire fellow Virginians to be involved in the campaign. Currently, George Allen is considered the favorite. Allen, the Republican, has been our governor and then a senator until defeated by Jim Webb.

The Republican Party has control of the Virginia House of Delegates and looks to take over the Senate after the election this year. I continue to serve on candidate interview teams to bring a Republican view to any possible endorsements by PAC. I urge everyone to continue to contribute PAC money and always bring your voice to the endorsement process.

The NEA Mid-Atlantic Leadership Conference will be held in Arlington, Virginia on January 27-29, 2012. I will conduct a business meeting for all the participants during the conference. Please contact your state president to let them know that you would like to attend. Otherwise, you should consider being a presenter. Stay involved and have a great school year!

Greetings from Southeast Chair Michele Bowman

Happy Fall Y'all!!! The past few months have proven to be extremely challenging for Associations across the Southeast. Continuing with the weather theme, we have dealt with deadly tornadoes, monsoonal rains and horrendous floods as well as unfriendly state legislatures. Several states lost collective bargaining rights and tenure laws changed. Along with this, many administrators were told that it would be illegal if they joined the Association. The Tennessee Education Association just sent out letters to over 21,000 administrators informing them that this is not true. What they were told was unconstitutional. Several counties have filed suit against their local school boards because they are not being allowed to communicate with members. There will be much more on this in upcoming Trunk Talks.

The next "hot" topic was the NEA Representative Assembly. The early endorsement of President Obama was a hot button for many of us. I spoke out in opposition to the move and was congratulated for my courage by other members who felt the same way, but did not want to speak up in public. I also posted a response to one of my state legislators about the upcoming vote and told her that I spoke out. Due to my opposition, she and several other legislators have expressed a desire to speak to me because I am a Republican who attends the RA. The night before Vice President Biden spoke to the RA, the New York Times posted an article about a possible change in running mates for the 2012 elections. Most people were unaware of this report until after the vote for the early endorsement on Monday. On Tuesday, there was a great deal of "buyer's remorse" when people began seeing the report in other media. People began asking if the early endorsement could be rescinded. The answer to this question was a definitive "no." This could be another storm for us to weather as an Association because state legislatures will see how the vote went and not know that 28 percent of us in attendance were against this decision.

NEA-RA 2011 Official Caucus Meeting Minutes ***Prepared by Recording Secretary Neil Wilson***

NEA-REC Caucus Executive Board Meeting -June 30, 2011

Meeting at McCormick Convention Center, Chicago

Meeting called to order at 4:26 PM by Davina Keiser.

Attendance: Davina Keiser, Kathy Gann (VP), Larry Felts (Treasurer), Neil Wilson (Recording Secretary), Jerome Hoynes (Corresponding Secretary), Ron Edwards (Pacific Region Chair), Michelle Bachman (Southeastern Chair), Gil Highlander (of TN) and Mel Wright.

Items Discussed:

1. Table in Exhibit Hall: There is not a table yet in the non-profit booth. It was reported that the Convention Center was charging \$1000 for a "for-Profit" table. We will be operating a table in the non-profit area for a fee of \$75.
2. Elections: During this RA, elections will need to be held for the Chair, the Treasurer, Northeastern Chair, Southeastern chair and the Western chair whose terms are up. There will also need to be an election to fill the spot of the Mid-western chair. Davina will be asking Charlotte to chair the elections. An election timeline will be announced at the Saturday meeting. The tentative schedule includes:
 - a. Saturday: Announce elections and receive nominations.
 - b. Sunday: Speaker at Caucus
 - c. Monday: Close nominations, candidate speeches and elections with voting until 2 PM.
 - d. Tuesday: Announce Results and hold run off elections if needed.
3. Endorsement of Obama: Lily spoke to multiple state delegations (including California and Kansas) today regarding the NEA endorsement of President of Obama for a second term. It was acknowledged that there was a mixed reaction to this with some states prior to the convention voting for endorsement and others against it. Members stated concerns with an early endorsement of President Obama though the NEA could still vote to endorse him next year. It was also noted that 58% of the membership must vote yes in order for the NEA to officially endorse any candidate for President.

Members at the meeting stated they wanted to take action on the floor and work with people who wish to oppose an early endorsement for the President. It was moved by Michelle Bachman and seconded by Kathy Gann to oppose the early recommendation and endorsement of President Obama for reelection by the NEA. The Republican caucus would also develop a rationale statement for this position. Some of the items included in the rationale include:

 - a. By an early endorsement, there is a disenfranchisement of 1/3 of the membership who may support a candidate of either another party or within the Democratic Party itself.
 - b. There exists no valid or reliable test that accurately measure or reflect a teacher's effectiveness.
 - c. ESEA is considered to not be supportive of public school teachers and public education. There has been little effort to enact a successor Public Law in the 3 years since taking office.
 - d. Race To The Top policies are undermining our collective bargaining rights as teachers.

Motion passed unanimously.
4. Mary Kussler speaking to caucus: Mary Kussler wanted to speak to the caucus. It was decided by consent to invite her to speak on Sunday. If there are questions you wish to ask, please bring those on Sunday. One member stated they would like to ask how a candidate is given an A-F rating by the NEA.

5. Funding of Leadership Conferences: We do not have to move an NBI to fund leadership conference attendees this year. The support of state Presidents last year led to this being funded by the NEA as part of its annual budget.
6. NBI Items to support: Davina noted if there are NBI items of note that members are introducing, please let Davina know so the caucus can take supportive actions on them. Ron noted that there are some problems with the distribution of literature by caucuses. There will likely be an NBI or a bylaw amendment on the floor regarding it and the caucus may wish to take a position of opposition.
7. Randy Moody Award: It was proposed to award the 2011 Randy Moody award to Lamar Alexander, Senator of Tennessee. It was moved by Michelle Bachman and seconded by Ron Edwards that the Republican Education Caucus awards the Randy Moody Award to Lamar Alexander. Motion passed unanimously. The award will be given to Senator Alexander at the Leadership Conference the week of July 11-14, 2011 in Washington DC.
8. Other items: The caucus and other groups will be attending the White Sox game on July 4. Also, Kathy Gann will be auctioning items to raise funds for the caucus.
9. Financial Report: Larry Fells reported on the finances of the caucus. He noted that there is a current balance of \$2,577 in the checking account. There have been no checks written or any additional revenues since the NEA RA last year. It was moved Kathy Gann and seconded by Michelle Bachman to accept the Treasurer's Report. Motion passed Unanimously.
10. Adjournment: The Meeting was adjourned at 5:47 PM.

NEA-REC Caucus Meeting -July 3, 2011

Meeting was called to order at 2:46 PM.

1. Caucus Booth: Our booth is #34 in the non-profit section. The non-profit section is located to the right side as you are coming out of the RA hall just past the eating area.
2. Officers of the Caucus were introduced by Davina Keiser
3. Meetings Tomorrow: We will have two meetings tomorrow from 9:30-10:00 AM and a second meeting during the afternoon recess.
4. July 4 Activity: We will be in attendance at the White Sox game. See Michelle Bowman if interested.
5. Joe Biden Speech: Davina noted some complaints she received from members regarding Biden's speech. She read a text she received from a member who was not happy with the anti-business and anti-Republican rhetoric that was being said by Joe Biden. Davina plans to send a letter to Dennis Van Roekel regarding this as well as the overall tone towards Republicans in general during the convention this year. Jerome said he would like to know what Van Roekel's response is to Davina's letter. Other members also expressed displeasure of the speech and other related issues.
6. Republican Leadership Conference: Mary Kussler and Erin Duncan have been working to ensure continuous funding for the Leadership Conference attendees. It was noted that due to some last minute cancelations there are some openings for the conference which is scheduled to take place from July 11-14, 2011 in Washington DC. If you are interested, be sure to contact Davina regarding this. The goal is to get the Republican teachers to be more active on education issues
7. NBI 25: Dr. Parsons talked briefly about NBI 25 and asked for support of the item.
8. Rationale statement: Neil Wilson distributed a rationale statement for opposing Obama's early endorsement. If there are changes please let Neil know. A final draft will be e-mailed to the caucus this evening.
9. NBI 52: Charlotte has submitted NBI 52 and she briefly mentioned it, and she will be looking for the NBI to be referred to the appropriate committee.
10. Meeting Recessed: Meeting recessed at 3:18 PM.

NEA-REC Caucus Meeting -Sunday, July 5, 2011

1. Call to Order: Meeting was called to order at 9:37 AM
2. NBIS: Davina asked if there were any NBIs for us to support. No member requested support.
3. Tampa Bay: The St. Pete Times forum will be hosting the Republican Convention from August 23-27, 2012. Every member is encouraged to be there. We will be having a table at the convention to promote education issues.
4. Dake Resolution: Leslie Dake won the ESP election yesterday. Michele Bowman of TN and Kathy Gann of KS seconded a motion to recognize the election of Leslie Dake as ESP. Motion passed unanimously.
5. Executive Officer Meeting: The executive officers will be meeting at 1 PM at booth 34 to discuss activities over the next year. Booth will be open till 5 PM today.
6. E-mail updates: Davina Keiser will be sending periodic updates once a month to the caucus. Davina shared her e-mail address of davinakaiser@yahoo.com and her personal phone number with the delegation so members can send Davina updates on activities going on in their respective locales.
7. Leadership Conference 2012: If you are interested in attending the Leadership Conference in 2012, be sure to tell your state chapter representative or your state president.
8. Deadlines for Newsletter: The deadlines for the Newsletter are 10 days before they are sent out. The dates are: September 30, 2011, November 30, 2011, March 10, 2012 and May 31, 2012
9. Website: The website is going to be updated in the near future.
10. Fund Raising: Kathy is still auctioning items at the Republican Booth. There are also Republican Caucus T-shirts on sale. Be sure to see Davina if you are interested on purchasing a shirt.
11. State Chair contacts: A member wanted to know how we could get the contact information of the state Presidents and the caucus chair presidents. Davina said she will be contacting state caucus chairs and encouraging them to affiliate with the Republican Educators Caucus. Sandra of FL would like to be blind copied that contact information when it is sent out.
12. Davina thanked people for attending the caucus meetings. Davina also asked people who do not have e-mail addresses to see Davina to ensure we can stay in touch with you.
13. Meeting Adjourned: Meeting recessed at 10:00 AM.

Visit the Republican Educators Caucus website:

www.elephanteducators.org

AND

Join our expanding group page on facebook.com as

Republican Educators Caucus (NEA)

Caucus Executive Board Conference Call- Oct. 2, 2011

Attendees: Davina Keiser (CA), David Gould (KS), Neil Wilson (CA) and Laura Bochner (NJ)

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 12:03 PM
2. Northeast Report: Laura noted that the governor of New Jersey is considering running for President. A lot of things are being held up as a result. A lawsuit has been filed in New Jersey because of recent changes being made to the pension system. The state may have to pay back. He only wants to contribute 1/7 of the employee contributions.
3. Western Region Report: David reported in Oklahoma that some anti-union bills are going through the legislature. He also noted that Special Education students have the option of attending public or private schools, but many students don't take advantage of the private school option. The school district pays for the cost of attending the private school. Two school districts are currently fighting this in the court system. David also said that if we have good ideas for bills, we should submit them to the legislature. He also visited South Africa with NEA and spoke to a guy named Jim Baker from Europe. He suggested that the public sector unions should do a better job of coordinating activities with the private sector unions on a nationwide basis.
4. Secretary Report: Neil noted in the San Jose area there is a lot of pending arbitration cases related to grievances and many of the districts are changing school districts.
5. Submission of Articles: Davina also reminded people to submit their articles to Jerome as soon as possible if not already done. He's hoping to send a new edition out to everyone this next weekend.
6. Future Meetings: December 3, 2011, March 10, 2012, and June 16, 2012. All meetings are on a Saturday, and they are scheduled to begin at 9 AM Pacific Time and 12 o'clock noon Eastern Standard Time.
7. Meeting Adjourned at 12:28 PM.

NEA-REC 2011-2012 Caucus Membership

Please consider joining our organization. Membership forms are also available on our caucus website.

Name _____

Address _____

Best Telephone # _____

Best E-mail _____

Please return this membership form with a \$20 check (\$5 student members) made out to the "NEA-REC".
Mail payment to: NEA-REC Treasurer Larry Fells, 18389 Flat Oak Rd., Anderson, CA 96007.

Thanks for your support!

Senator Lamar Alexander of Tennessee Honored as the "Randy Moody Friend of Education Award" Winner

Leaders of the NEA-REC including National Caucus Chair Davina Keiser, NEA Board of Directors Member & Pacific Region Chair Ron Edwards and Southeast Regional Chair Michele Bowman were among those who excitedly presented the "Randy Moody Friend of Education Award" to Tennessee's distinguished U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander in a ceremony during the Fifth Annual NEA Republican Leaders Conference. Senator Alexander was chosen for his various roles in the federal government as a pro-public education advocate, including his time serving as U.S. Secretary of Education.

Caucus re-elects leadership team at NEA-RA in Chicago

At meetings of the NEA-RA membership present this summer at the 2011 NEA-RA in Chicago, national officers Davina Keiser and Larry Fells, both of California, were re-elected to lead the Republican Educators Caucus. Keiser will continue to serve as National Caucus Chair with Fells managing our finances as National Treasurer. The Caucus also selected three regional chairs including: Laura Bochner of New Jersey as Northeast Regional Chair, Michele Bowman of Tennessee as Southeast Regional Chair and David Gould of Oklahoma as Western Regional Chair. Thanks to the NEA-REC Executive Committee team for their leadership efforts and service to our cause.

TRUNK TALK

NEA-REC Newsletter

P.O. Box 6

Winnetka, IL 60093



Trunks Up!