

NASB News Update--April 2017

News from the Association, Nevada, and Across the Nation



Office 549 Court Street Reno, NV 89501
Mailing PO Box 14855 Reno, NV 89507
Phone 775/657-8411 Fax 775/453-1017

Supporting Success for All Students
through Local School Board Leadership



**A
Message
from
NASB's
President**



National Teacher Appreciation Day is May 9, 2017. Although I am well aware that this month is April, I want to bring attention to this important opportunity for all Nevada school boards to prepare for recognizing teachers for the crucial work they do in each of our schools.

Along those lines, here is one of my favorite poems, **Heart of a Teacher**, written by Paula J. Fox that focuses on the amazing role that teachers play in the lives of our students.

The child arrives like a mystery box...
with puzzle pieces inside
some of the pieces are broken or missing...
and others just seem to hide

But the HEART of a teacher can sort them out...
and help the child to see
the potential for greatness he has within...
a picture of what he can be

Her goal isn't just to teach knowledge...
by filling the box with more parts
it's putting the pieces together...
to create a work of art.

The process is painfully slow at times...
some need more help than others
each child is a work in progress...
with assorted shapes and colors

First she creates a classroom...
where the child can feel safe in school
where he never feels threatened or afraid to try...
and kindness is always the rule

She knows that a child can achieve
much more when he feels secure inside
when he's valued and loved...and believes in
himself ...
and he has a sense of pride

She models and teaches good character...
and respect for one another
how to focus on strengths...not weaknesses
and how to encourage each other

She gives the child the freedom he needs...
to make choices on his own
so he learns to become more responsible...
and is able to stand alone

He's taught to be strong and think for himself...
as his soul and spirit heal
and the puzzle that's taking shape inside...
has a much more positive feel

The child discovers the joy that comes...
from learning something new...
and his vision grows as he begins
to see all the things he can do

A picture is formed as more pieces fit...
an image of the child within
with greater strength and confidence...
and a belief that he can win!

All because a hero was there...
in the HEART of a teacher who cared
enabling the child to become much more...
than he ever imagined...or dared

A teacher with a HEART for her children...
knows what teaching is all about
she may not have all the answers...
but on this...she has no doubt

NASB News Update--April 2017

News from the Association, Nevada, and Across the Nation

When asked which subjects she loved to teach, she answered this way and smiled...

"It's not the subjects that matter...
It's all about teaching the CHILD."

I want to reiterate something that I've written about before, but this is important—how much we appreciate all of the work that the members of the **NASB Legislative Advisory Committee** are doing on behalf of all of us during the 2017 Session. The Committee is chaired by Bridget Peterson. Members include Stacie Wilke-McCulloch [Carson City], Erin Cranor [Clark], Bob Burnham [Eureka], Sheri Sampson [Mineral], Tim Sutton [Nye], John Mayer [Washoe], and me.

We are all grateful for the work that Dotty does as our Executive Director to review all of the bills then pare down the number for the Committee's review. She also prepares guidance for Jessica Ferrato, the Association's public policy specialist.

Special thanks to Jessica Ferrato for the work that she does testifying before committees, meeting with committee chairs, working with bill sponsors, working with Dotty on friendly amendments, and everything else she does on behalf of NASB. We know that Jessica works long days and late nights. Thank you for your dedication and commitment.

I appreciate all that you do each day to increase opportunities for learning and achievement for all of our Nevada students attending public schools throughout the seventeen school districts. Don't forget to thank a teacher today or soon.

Sincerely,

Wade Poulsen

NASB President



How to Make a Good Teacher

What matters in schools is teachers. Fortunately, teaching can be taught.

FORGET smart uniforms and small classes. The secret to stellar grades and thriving students is teachers. One American study found that in a single year's teaching the top 10% of teachers impart three times as much learning to their pupils as the worst 10% do. Another suggests that, if black pupils were taught by the best quarter of teachers, the gap between their achievement and that of white pupils would disappear.



But efforts to ensure that every teacher can teach are hobbled by the tenacious myth that good teachers are born, not made. Classroom heroes like Robin Williams in "Dead Poets Society" or Michelle Pfeiffer in "Dangerous Minds" are endowed with exceptional, innate inspirational powers.

Government policies, which often start from the same assumption, seek to raise teaching standards by attracting high-flying graduates to join the profession and prodding bad teachers to leave. Teachers' unions, meanwhile, insist that if only their members were set free from central diktat, excellence would follow.

The premise that teaching ability is something you either have or don't is mistaken. A new breed of teacher-trainers is founding a rigorous science of pedagogy. The aim is to make ordinary teachers great, just as sports coaches help athletes of all abilities to improve their personal best. Done right, this will revolutionize schools and change lives.

NASB News Update--April 2017

News from the Association, Nevada, and Across the Nation

Quis docebit ipsos doctores?

Education has a history of lurching from one miracle solution to the next. The best of them even do some good. Teach for America, and the dozens of organizations it has inspired in other countries, have brought ambitious, energetic new graduates into the profession. And dismissing teachers for bad performance has boosted results in Washington, DC, and elsewhere. But each approach has its limits. Teaching is a mass profession: it cannot grab all the top graduates, year after year. When poor teachers are fired, new ones are needed—and they will have been trained in the very same system that failed to make fine teachers out of their predecessors.

By contrast, the idea of improving the average teacher could revolutionize the entire profession. Around the world, few teachers are well enough prepared before being let loose on children. In poor countries many get little training of any kind.

A recent report found 31 countries in which more than a quarter of primary-school teachers had not reached (minimal) national standards. In rich countries the problem is more subtle. Teachers qualify following a long, specialized course. This will often involve airy discussions of theory—on ecopedagogy, possibly, or conscientisation (don't ask). Some of these courses, including masters' degrees in education, have no effect on how well their graduates' pupils end up being taught.

What teachers fail to learn in universities and teacher-training colleges they rarely pick up on the job. They become better teachers in their first few years as they get to grips with real pupils in real classrooms, but after that improvements tail off. This is largely because schools neglect their most important pupils: teachers themselves.

Across the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Develop (OCED) of mostly rich countries, two-fifths of teachers say they have never had a chance to learn by sitting in on another teacher's lessons; nor have they been asked to give feedback on their peers.

Those who can, learn

If this is to change, teachers need to learn how to impart knowledge and prepare young minds to receive and retain it. Good teachers set clear goals, enforce high standards of behavior and manage their lesson time wisely. They use tried-

and-tested instructional techniques to ensure that all the brains are working all of the time, for example asking questions in the classroom with "cold calling" rather than relying on the same eager pupils to put up their hands.



Instilling these techniques is easier said than done. With teaching as with other complex skills, the route to mastery is not abstruse theory but intense, guided practice grounded in subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical methods.

Trainees should spend more time in the classroom. The places where pupils do best, for example Finland, Singapore and Shanghai, put novice teachers through a demanding apprenticeship. In America high-performing charter schools teach trainees in the classroom and bring them on with coaching and feedback.

Teacher-training institutions need to be more rigorous—rather as a century ago medical schools raised the caliber of doctors by introducing systematic curriculums and providing clinical experience. It is essential that teacher-training colleges start to collect and publish data on how their graduates perform in the classroom. Courses that produce teachers who go on to do little or nothing to improve their pupils' learning should not receive subsidies or see their graduates become teachers. They would then have to improve to survive.

Big changes are needed in schools, too, to ensure that teachers improve throughout their careers. Instructors in the best ones hone their craft through observation and coaching. They accept critical feedback—which their unions should not resist, but welcome as only proper for people doing such an important job. The best head teachers hold novices' hands by, say, giving them high-quality lesson plans and arranging for more experienced teachers to cover for them when they need time for further study and practice.

NASB News Update--April 2017

News from the Association, Nevada, and Across the Nation

Money is less important than you might think. Teachers in top-of-the-class Finland, for example, earn about the OECD average. But ensuring that the best stay in the classroom will probably, in most places, mean paying more. People who thrive in front of pupils should not have to become managers to earn a pay rise. And more flexibility on salaries would make it easier to attract the best teachers to the worst schools.

Improving the quality of the average teacher would raise the profession's prestige, setting up a virtuous cycle in which more talented graduates clamored to join it. But the biggest gains will come from preparing new teachers better, and upgrading the ones already in classrooms. The lesson is clear; it now just needs to be taught.

[This article originally appeared in The Economist, June 11, 2016.]

Which States Pay Teachers the Most (and the Least)?

By Brenda Iasevoli

Alaska and New York pay teachers nearly double the salaries of those working in Mississippi and Oklahoma, says a new study by GoBankingRates.

According to the finance website, teachers in Alaska and New York are paid each year on average \$77,843 and \$76,953, respectively. By contrast, the averages in Mississippi and Oklahoma are \$42,043 and \$42,647, respectively.

To be fair, many of the states with higher teacher pay also have higher costs of living. (You can use this tool to compare costs of living in different cities and states across the country.)

And a salary on the high end doesn't necessarily mean easy living. The authors show, for instance, that the average salary in California of \$72,050 "is just a tad under the amount of money needed to live comfortably in [the state]."

What's more, a starting teacher's salary would be much less, closer to \$40,000 per year, according to the California Department of Education.

Many of the states with the lowest salaries are working to increase teacher pay, often to combat teacher shortages. Lawmakers in Oklahoma say raising teacher pay is a top priority. Under a bill filed by state Senator David Holt, Oklahoma teachers would receive a \$10,000 pay raise by 2021. Governor Doug Ducey of Arizona has also recently made a big push to boost teacher salaries across the state.

The average teacher salaries in 50 states (not including the District of Columbia) were calculated using data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics.



The authors averaged the mean salaries of elementary, middle, and high school teachers to get the average salary in each state. The calculations did not include the salaries of special education teachers. Here are the 10 states where teachers get paid the most and the 10 states where teachers earn the least.

The 10 states where teachers get paid the most:

1. Alaska: \$77,843
2. New York: \$76,953
3. Connecticut: \$75,867
4. California: \$72,050
5. Massachusetts: \$71,587
6. New Jersey: \$70,700
7. Rhode Island: \$67,533
8. Maryland: \$65,257
9. Illinois: \$65,153
10. Virginia: \$63,493

The 10 states where teachers get paid the least:

1. Mississippi: \$42,043
2. Oklahoma: \$42,647
3. South Dakota: \$43,200
4. North Carolina: \$43,587
5. Arizona: \$43,800
6. West Virginia: \$45,477
7. Arkansas: \$47,053
8. Idaho: \$47,063
9. Kansas: \$47,127
10. Louisiana: \$48,587

NASB News Update--April 2017

News from the Association, Nevada, and Across the Nation

Plan Ahead for NASB's 2017 Conference

November 17-18—Reno, Atlantis Casino Resort Spa



**Governance Meetings
November 16, 2017**

How Many Transgender Children Are There?

By Evie Blad

As policymakers and educators debate the rights of transgender children in schools, they have no federal data to answer even the most basic question: How many transgender children are there?

That's because publicly collected data on transgender individuals—part of a U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention survey—is not collected in every state, and participating states only survey adults.

Although it's generally believed that transgender children make up a relatively small share of the population, advocates surmise some are now more likely to "come out" and transition at younger ages than in years past because of greater public awareness of the issue.



About 0.7 percent of 13- to 17-year-olds living in the United States identify as transgender, some 150,000 teenagers, according to an estimate released in January by the Williams Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Law. The think tank, which researches issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity, based its estimates on statistical modeling rather than direct surveys of children.

More work is needed to gather more representative and demographic data about transgender youths, the organization says.

Why are data on transgender students important?

Federal civil rights laws should protect the interests of transgender children, regardless of how many there are, advocacy groups say. But more complete data could help explain the need for clear, consistent policies related to transgender students to state and local officials, they say.

Questions about transgender students have only grown since the Trump administration rescinded Obama-era guidance on gender identity last month.

That guidance had put schools on notice that they could be found in violation of the sex-discrimination protections of Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 if they didn't honor students' gender identity.

NASB News Update--April 2017

News from the Association, Nevada, and Across the Nation

In withdrawing that guidance, the Trump administration left it to state and local decision-makers to determine how to handle a range of issues, including what restrooms and locker rooms transgender students should use, whether to call them by their desired pronoun, and how to handle identifying their gender on student records.

For educational leaders, conversations about those decisions can remain hypothetical for a long time—until a transgender student enrolls in their school. Because transgender students represent a small proportion of the population, it can take a while for smaller, rural districts to confront such issues. When they do, it can be a scramble.

And the decisions can lead to criticism from various corners, school leaders say.

Texas school athletics officials, for example, have faced stiff criticism after they required a transgender boy to compete against girls in wrestling even after he underwent hormone therapy and said he wanted to compete in the boys division. He recently won the state's girls' wrestling championship, and parents and other athletes complained that the testosterone treatments gave him an unfair advantage.

How did researchers create their estimate?

The Williams Institute used data from the CDC's Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, a telephone survey that asks adults a range of health- and demographic-related questions.

Nineteen states asked optional questions about transgender identity in 2014, and an additional eight states asked those questions in 2015.

Researchers looked for correlations between transgender status and other factors, such as age and religious affiliation. They matched those correlations against demographic data in every state to create estimates for the teenage population.

Are there efforts to collect more federal data on transgender students?

Some researchers and advocacy groups have pushed in recent years to expand the data that federal agencies collect related to students' sexual orientation and gender identity.

Questions added in recent years to surveys collected by the CDC and the U.S. Department of Education have provided additional data points about bisexual, gay, and lesbian students, but none has focused on gender identity.

Advocacy groups say adding more questions about such issues to federal surveys would help examine how LGBT students are treated in schools, whether they experience higher rates of peer victimization, and how those experiences affect their lives and academic outcomes.

But that push comes amid complaints from some education leaders that data collection is already cumbersome and overwhelming. And, in some states, parents have pushed back against student surveys out of privacy concerns.

To this point, most data on the experiences of transgender students are collected by groups like GLSEN and other advocacy organizations and by academic researchers.

What's next in the national debate over transgender-student rights?

At least six cases are in federal courts right now that are related to schools' transgender-student policies. Those include the case of Gavin Grimm, a Virginia boy who sued the Gloucester County, VA, district after it would not let him use the boys' restroom.

The U.S. Supreme Court was scheduled to hear Grimm's case March 28. But after the change in interpretation by the Trump administration, the high court sent the case back to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit, in Richmond, Va., to determine if Title IX and its accompanying regulations apply to transgender students. That court had originally deferred to the now-rescinded interpretation of the Obama administration.

[This article originally appeared in Education Week, March 7, 2017.]

**NASB Joint Meeting
Board of Directors and
Executive Committee**

**April 7 at 215pm
Reno—Hyatt Place Hotel**

NASB News Update--April 2017

News from the Association, Nevada, and Across the Nation



Nevadans Attend NSBA Conference in Denver

More than 50 Nevadans attended the NSBA Conference in Denver, March 25-27.

NASB was represented at the Delegate Assembly held on March 24 by Wade Poulsen [President, Lincoln], Dawn Miller [Director, Storey], and Dr. Linda E. Young [Delegate, Clark]. Joe Crim, Jr. [Immediate Past President, Pershing] and Stacie Wilke-McCulloch [President Elect, Carson City] served as Alternates and also attended the Delegate Assembly.

The decisions made by the Delegate Assembly establish the policies that govern NSBA and provide direction for the advocacy work of the Association.

Each year, the Delegate Assembly deals with both Beliefs & Policies and Resolutions. Both together comprise the enduring principles of NSBA and form the philosophical basis of the Association and its work representing state associations of school boards and their member districts across the United States.

State association members are entitled to voting delegates who serve a term of one year under a formula reflecting student enrollment and defined in the NSBA Constitution and Bylaws. This year, 136 Delegates participated in the Assembly.

This year for the first time, Nevada Delegates attended the hearing held the day before the Assembly conducted by the Committee on Policies and Resolutions. At the hearing, the Committee heard new proposed resolutions and changes to previously proposed resolutions. This was an amazing opportunity for NASB's delegates to participate in the governance process.

In addition to determining the NSBA policies and advocacy guidance, the Delegate Assembly is responsible for the election of NSBA's President, President Elect, Secretary-Treasurer, and 15 additional members of the NSBA Board of Directors.

This year's Delegate Assembly was 55% male and 45% female. More than 63% of the representatives were over 55. Thirty percent of the delegates lived in small towns, 28% lived in suburbs, 31% lived in rural areas, and 11% lived in urban areas. Sixty-five% of delegates had served more than ten years on their boards.

The majority of delegates—58%--serve in districts with fewer than 5,000 students. Only 17% serve in districts with more than 20,000 students.

The two most hotly debated issues for discussion and action focused on gender identity and use of public funds for privatization.



Nevada's Delegates—Dr. Linda E. Young [Clark], Dawn Miller [Storey], and Wade Poulsen [Lincoln]



NASB's Executive Director, Dotty Merrill, reconnects with Delegate Linda Lyon [President Elect, Arizona School Boards Association, Tucson]

NASB News Update--April 2017

News from the Association, Nevada, and Across the Nation

Key Demographic Trends Affecting Public Schools

We are growing older. In 2010, the median age in the United States had reached 37.2 years of age, up 1.9 years from the 2000 median age of 35.3 years.

We are growing more diverse. Trends in immigration and birth rates indicate that soon there will be no majority racial or ethnic group in the United States—no one group that makes up more than fifty percent of the total population. Already almost one in ten U.S. counties has a population that is more than fifty percent minority. Eight counties reached that status in 2006, bringing the total to 303 of the nation's 3,141 counties.

We are growing older and more diverse at the same time. Non-Hispanic whites are the oldest; Hispanics are the youngest. Our youngest populations are the most diverse; forty-seven percent of children younger than five belong to a racial or ethnic minority group.

These trends mean:

- The population that schools educate is increasingly made up of children of color and Hispanic origin.
- The population that schools depend on for financial support is increasingly older, non-Hispanic, and white, and does not have school-age children.
- A multi-hued workforce will support the social safety nets that growing populations of elderly non-Hispanic whites depend on.
- Achievement gaps between student groups will have ever-more-serious economic implications. Minorities have historically been under-represented in such professions as science, medicine, and engineering. With the non-Hispanic white population shrinking and the entry-level workforce increasingly made up of minorities, the nation could face serious shortages in many critical professions.

The U.S. population as a whole is growing rapidly. Between 2000 and 2010, the U.S. population grew 9.7 percent from 281.4 million to

approximately 308.7 million. This population growth of 25.6 million people in one decade is slightly lower than the 32.7 million growth between 1990 and 2000, which was the biggest census-to-census increase (from the Census Brief "Population Change and Distribution 1990-2000") in U.S. history. On Tuesday, Oct. 16, 2006, the U.S. population reached a milestone where the population topped 300 million.

The West and South are growing more quickly than the Northeast and Midwest. Between 2000 and 2010, the West's population grew by 14.3 percent and the South's population by 13.8 percent. In contrast, the Midwest grew by 3.9 percent and the Northeast by 3.2 percent.

[Data compiled by the Center on Education Statistics, <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org/Main-Menu/Staffingstudents/Changing-Demographics-At-a-glance/The-United-States-of-education-The-changing-demographics-of-the-United-States-and-their-schools.html>]

Special Thanks to These Generous
NASB Corporate Friends—

ANCHORMAN INC.

aramark

ATLANTIC
RESEARCH PARTNERS

ByteSpeed®
PARTNERS FOR EDUCATION

DATA RECOGNITION
DRC
CORPORATION