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Are We in Danger of Losing Teaching as a Profession?

Sometime in the second half of the 20th century, we danced out of our teacher preparation programs clutching our diplomas and our teaching certificates. We were headed out to make a difference for each student we taught. As we began to share the content we had learned and implement the strategies we were taught, we realized that we needed to learn much more.

Just why were all our students not performing at the desired level? What could be done to reach those who were seemingly unreachable? How could our teaching skills be improved? Would learning from each other be possible?

We pursued the latest in brain theory---adding experiences to our curriculum delivery that helped engage the adolescent brain much more deeply. We studied the impact that poverty has on a child's ability to learn. Again, we refurbished our curriculum by differentiating our instruction thus addressing the gaps in prior experiences our students had. Oh my, then came the advent of technology. Did that ever shake up the teaching profession and the student's learning environment! Once more we made changes in our daily work as well as that of the students, all with the intent of students learning the content more deeply.

Along the way, we became advocates for our students and our chosen profession. We knew how to adapt to the students' needs and we knew how to explain the "whys" of the curriculum we had designed within the parameters provided by the Kentucky Academic Standards. In fact, we still do. We may need to quickly share our understanding of teaching and learning with current policy makers.

Let's not forget, the Kentucky Academic Standards define the content Kentucky's students are to learn. They were developed with input from educators, business leaders and parents. Our teachers understand that the Standards are what our students need to know to achieve their desired measures of success and are well equipped with the skills needed to reach their students.

As your president, I regularly attend the House Education Committee and the Senate Education Committee meetings. Their conversations lead me to believe the pendulum is swinging from the well-prepared teaching professional working in concert with parents to design quality educational experiences toward presenting highly defined content determined by legislative actions and groups of vocal parents delivered under strict parameters. This has the potential of reducing access to content our students deem relevant and to delete teaching strategies that make the content come alive.

Today, as I waited to enter the Capital Annex, I overheard an area teacher talking about the number of teaching professionals that had left the local school system recently. This took my mind back to a similar conversation a couple of months ago with personnel directors of two small school districts in southcentral Kentucky. They, too, expressed that many teachers were leaving their systems at the end of the first semester---leaving the profession. . . quitting. . . not retiring. My daughter helps a college sorority with 119 members. Not one of these young ladies is preparing to teach. Current teachers are leaving; future teachers are not being developed. Could the de-professionalism I described above be part the reason?

What can we as retired educators do? We can share how we used professional autonomy to design experiences that helped our students internalize the content found in the Kentucky

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- 4** KEA RETIRED ANNUAL MEETING
- 6** OH THE PLACES WE'LL GO

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Academic Standards. We can encourage more advocacy among active teachers. Their stories need to be shared. We can encourage young professionals to enter the teaching profession. See you in Louisville at the KEA-Retired Annual meeting April 6th at the Galt House.

Brenda



All KEA-Retired members rock, but some really ROC!

Retirees on Call are retirees who live near the Frankfort area and are willing to respond to requests involving legislative issues upon short notice. You might be asked to come to Frankfort to attend committee meetings, to meet with your representative or senator on a very short notice. Or, you might be asked to send messages to them quickly.

If this appeals to you, contact Kathy Whitlock at Kathryn.Whitlock@kea.org.

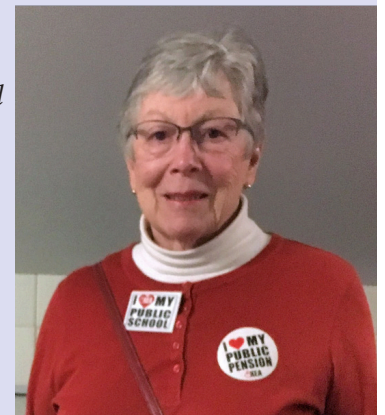
Remembering Gayle Greer, a lifelong education advocate

On December 24, 2021 the KEA/KEA-Retired family lost a true advocate, Gayle Greer, a life-long member. She had just finished a term as KEA-Retired, Central District President. Gayle had filled myriad association roles: chair of various local, district, state committees; local and district offices; member of the KEA Board of Directors and the KEA-Retired Board.

Gayle never said “no” when asked to serve our association whether it be filling a committee spot, mentoring young educators, or going door-to-door for KEPAC endorsed candidates. Her quiet strength and belief in the core principles of our association fueled her passion for association work. She was a worker for educational causes.

Gayle’s actions showed her concern for all members, never losing sight of their needs as she contributed to association work. If there was a project to be done, she was right there---calming and supporting others as the task was brought to fruition. For these reasons, Gayle Greer was named the 2021 KEA-Retired Friend of Education.

Gayle, you are missed every day.



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2021-2022**

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Districts: News & Notes

FIRST DISTRICT KEA-R NEWS At First District KEA-R Zoom Meeting, November 15, 2021 long time colleague of Arletta Kennedy, Lana Blish, gave devotional celebrating Arletta's birthday and dedication to others. Charlotte Benton, president welcomed newly hired First District Uniserv Director, Kim Morgan, who shared what she has been doing and what she plans to do. KEA-R Board alternate, Charlotte Benton, gave report of November 10th meeting. Kathy Hobbs was elected to fill seat of Vicki Bordon which expires June 15, 2022. Marie Nance was elected to fill seat of Donna Whitefield which expires June 15, 2023. Jane Gilbert, TRS Representative for Health Insurance shared a PowerPoint presentation on Health Insurance, followed by questions and answers. Next meeting will be held February 28th.

NKEA-Retired – In September, NKEA-R was excited to welcome members back to an in-person meeting for the first time in a long time. We were able to share boxed lunches from Chicken Salad Chick as we watched an excellent Zoom presentation by Dora Moore from Teacher Retirement System. Dora shared very useful information on TRS benefits, KEHP, and United Health Care. TRS staff always does an excellent job. We also elected new officers for this year since it was the first time we had been together in person. Our new officers are: Debbie Wooton, President; Fred Hester, Vice President; Cindy Williams, Secretary; and Patti Hester, Treasurer. Many thanks to Janet Jackson who has done a wonderful job as our president for several years.

In November we continued our tradition of informative programs for our members with a presentation by KEA's own Kayne Ishmael. Kayne did an excellent presentation on KEPAC, how it operates, and why it is so important to public education in KY. We also shared some ideas on how to bring more KEA retirees in Northern KY into our group.

On December 7 we welcomed representatives from the KY League of Women Voters to Northern KY to discuss KY redistricting. They presented very interesting information about the numbers and processes used to determine voting districts, as well as their own proposed voting maps.

Upcoming events include an NEA Member Benefits / Student Debt Forgiveness program on March 16 and a GPO/WEP presentation with our own Eddie Campbell on April 20.

Submitted by Cindy Williams, Secretary

Northern Kentucky Education Association - Retired

Central District Retired – KEA-Retired Central District members received informative updates on legislation relating to public education filed during the 2022 Legislative Session from our guests, Eddie Campbell – KEA President, and Michael Wilson – KEA Government Relations Director, during our ZOOM meeting on January 11, 2022. Brenda McGown, KEA-Retired President, reported on the grant received from NEA-Retired, encouraged members within easy driving distance of Frankfort to join Retirees on Call, and asked members to attend the KEA-R Day of Learning on February 17, 2022. Diane Woods, KEA-R-CD Vice President, is accepting suggestions from members on a way to honor our Central District Past-President, Gayle Greer.

To be added to our contacts list members can send their email address to Janet Cartmell at mjcartmell31@gmail.com.

We are looking forward to our next meeting on May 10, 2022 at 1:00 p.m. at the KEA-Lexington office.

KEA-Retired Annual Meeting

It is that time again, the KEA-Retired Annual Meeting is coming soon. This face-to-face meeting will be held April 6 at the Galt House in Louisville. This is your opportunity to impact directly the work of KEA-Retired while reconnecting with your past association friends.

The day will begin with on-site registration at 11 a.m. ET, followed by a buffet lunch at noon. The business meeting will begin at 3:00 p.m. ET.

Highlights of the meeting will include the presentation of the Tom Denton Memorial Scholarship as well as the KEA-Retired Friend of Education Award. Two constitutional amendments will be considered for adoption. The text of these follow at the end of this article.

An election will be held to fill one seat on the KEA Board of Directors. Should amendment 1 pass, an election will be held to fill a treasurer's position. We will also elect a retired member to represent us on the KEA Budget Committee. Any member of KEA-Retired may run for one of these positions. Nominations will be made from the floor. If you are interested in the responsibilities of these positions, contact either Kathy Whitlock or Brenda McGown.

All KEA-R members in attendance will have the opportunity to contribute during debate, to submit new business items, and to participate whenever votes are taken.

There is no cost to attend this general meeting. **But, we ask that you notify Kathy Whitlock at Kathryn.Whitlock@kea.org of your intent to attend.** This allows us to prepare enough materials and order ample food to provide your lunch.

This meeting serves as the pre-delegate caucus for the KEA-Retired delegates to the KEA Annual Meeting. Consequently, our elected delegates are expected to attend.

KEA-Retired Constitutional Amendment 1 was provided in its entirety in the last KEA-R newsletter. Here is a synopsis of how it would impact our association:

- Provide for the election of an executive officer, a treasurer, to fill a 3-year term
- The treasurer shall maintain the financial records, prepare financial statements, approve with associate staff all expense vouchers other than his/hers, prepared all checks needed to pay expenses other than his/her own, serve as a member of the KEA-R Budget Committee, and work with the selected professional to file required state and federal tax documents
- The president, along with associate staff will approve voucher of treasurer then write checks to him/her

KEA-Retired Constitutional Amendment 2

ARTICLE VII DISTRICT DIRECTORS

SECTION I. KEA-Retired members from each KEA-Retired district shall elect (1) District Director for each ~~600~~ **800** KEA retired members or major fraction thereof. . . .

RATIONALE: The current ratio produces a board that is cumbersome and not able to meet in provided locations.



The prescription formulary for the Medicare Eligible Health Plan changed January 1. This caused some fluctuation in what medications are covered as well as increases in copays for some medications. The Medicare monthly premium increased by \$15 over what had been expected. This impacted all retirees due to shared responsibility (the process used to fund the medical health trust). We are in the middle of a perfect storm – inflation much higher than we have seen, insurance premiums increasing, and confusion over availability and cost of medications. If you have questions about you prescription drugs, the KNOW YOUR Rx pharmacists are a helpful resource. Their toll-free number is 855-218-5979.

KEA-RETIRED BOARD NOMINATIONS DUE MAY 1

The following districts are due to elect new representatives for the KEA-Retired Board of Directors: Second, Third, Fourth, Fifth, Central, JCTA (2), MCEA, NKEA (2), and UCEA.

*Second, Fifth, JCTA and NKEA will elect an additional director due to growth.

The directors from Fifth, CENTRAL, NKEA and UCEA are eligible for re-election.

Directors elected by District KEA-Retired members serve a two-year term on the KEA-Retired Board and are limited to two (2) consecutive terms. Directors elected will serve from June 15, 2022 through June 14, 2024.

The KEA-Retired Board meets at least five times a year, usually at KEA Headquarters in Frankfort. District directors are expected to help organize district meetings and political activities, serve on committees, promote active and retired membership and report district news for use in the KEA-Retired newsletter.

If you wish to nominate yourself or someone else, please fill out the form below and submit it to KEA Headquarters at 401 Capitol Avenue, Frankfort, KY 40601, in care of Kathryn Whitlock. Once received, they will be processed and dated.

***All nomination forms are due by May 1, 2022. Should Amendment 2 be adopted at the annual meeting, this list will change. Appropriate notification will be made.**

NOMINATION FORM – KEA-Retired BOARD of DIRECTORS

Name : _____ Last 4 digits SS # _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Nomination: is for which KEA-Retired District? _____

Biographical statement (not to exceed 30 words): _____

Signature of nominee: _____



TRS WILL NO LONGER DEDUCT KEPAC CONTRIBUTIONS FROM YOUR TRS PENSION.

For the 2021-22 association year, KEPAC contributions are \$30. You have two options for retaining your KEPAC contributor status, either pay electronically by logging into www.kepac.org or send Kathy Whitlock check for \$30 made out to KEPAC.

Kathy's mailing address is KEA-Retired, 401 Capital Ave., Frankfort KY 40601.

If you are not currently a KEPAC member, please consider joining the effort to elect education friendly legislators.



Oh The Places We'll Go... You Could Go To

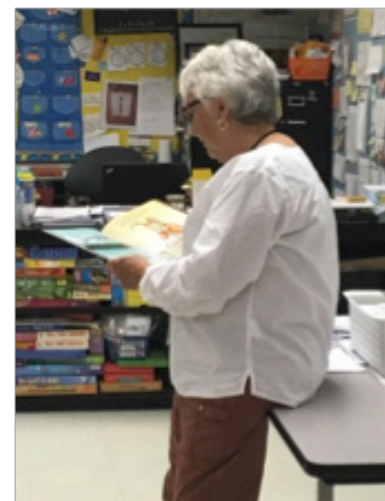
It happens standing in the line at Kroger, across the gas pumps and from table to table at the steakhouse (well pre-virus), people see you and ask "Heard you retired, miss teaching?" If you're like me, you have an answer and it usually ends with "but I sure miss the kids. It's a common denominator in most retiree's conversation. Don't miss the meetings, the lesson plans and the early mornings and late evenings, but we miss the kids. Another given is that it is just hard to corral retired folks long enough to get them involved in the district activities. So pair the two and try this project with your district.

Destination Read was born when Fifth district leaders were looking for a way to engage members, connect them to the active teacher in the classroom and connect with kids! A year later we have made five school wide visits and connected with best guess over 650 kids of elementary age!

It's really pretty simple. We invite and engage retirees who are interested. They pledge to give up about 2 hours, buy a grade appropriate hardback book and an item that is directly connected to the book. (For example, one teacher chose to read *Where Is Green Sheep?* to kindergarten kids and bought a green sheep stuffed animal to the reading. The district then adds pencils and bookmarks and a ribbon tied bundle of Sharpie's with a colorful note that reads "Thank you for Making a Mark in the Lives of Children!" All the books are labeled with a district sticker reading "Provided by a public school retired teacher"!

Behind the scenes it's a little more work. An active KEA teacher from the building takes on the task of meeting with the principal, engaging teachers who want a reader, and building a schedule that honors the school schedule and gets the approval of the principal. When reading day rolls around, retirees gather and the excitement is palatable. Readers meet their class, read the book they selected to share engaging the children as they read. They present the book and items to the classroom teacher and goodbyes and smiles abound! Some retirees opt to read to multiple classes. Some read picture books and some a couple of pages in a chapter book. In most cases, schools ask for a return visit and best of all teachers say that the kids are eager to check the book out and take it home to share! One reader reads a book to Kindergarteners entitled *Where is Green Sheep?*, she keeps the stuffed green sheep in a bag till the end of the story and the kids are charmed lining up to take a turn holding him. Another teacher dresses like Humpty Dumpty and reads the book *After the Fall*. The kids are enthralled with what Humpty did after his fall, eager to tell the story of when they had booboos and were hurt too. It's been a great project and although we were unable to read to several schools we had planned to visit this year. There's always Humpty Dumpty, Green Sheep and next year...

James Ray Morgan / Lisa Petrey-Kirk



Synopsis of Business---February 16, 2022 KEA-Retired Board of Directors Meeting

- ✓ Eddie Campbell-KEA President, Joel Wolford-KEA Vice President, and Michael Wilson-KEA GR Staff shared current actions of KY General Assembly
- ✓ Lisa Petrey-Kirk provided financial information showing that KEA-R has a current balance of \$415,095.60 with no outstanding bills.
- ✓ Charlotte Benton, chair of the audit committee, presented a written audit report showing that the financial records are in order. She recommended that a monthly reconciliation of the bank statement with the checkbook should occur. She also recommended establishing a deadline for checks written to be cashed. The Board added the recommendations to the KEA Board Policies after amending the 3rd one. Checks must be cashed within 60 days of receipt. Notification of this policy will be placed on all vouchers and checks.
- ✓ Approved/amended constitution committee's suggested constitution amendment to change the ratio of district directors to 1 director for each 800 members. This will be voted on at the annual meeting in April.
- ✓ Made housekeeping changes to KEA - R Board Policies.
- ✓ Received the recommendations for Tom Denton Memorial Scholarship and KEA-R Friend of Education award. These will be announced at the annual meeting.
- ✓ Reviewed tentative plans for the KEA-R Annual meeting at the Galt House, April 6
- ✓ Communications Committee presented various topics for articles to be included in future newsletters.
- ✓ PAL Committee suggested reactivation of the KEA-R O Cs (KEA-Retired on Call)—collect contact information for those members within driving distance who are willing to appear at legislative committee meetings, rallies, etc. upon short notice.

A complete set of minutes will be available upon request to members upon their approval at the next KEA-Retired Board meeting.

Don't forget to call TRS if you are considering returning to work full time under the recently relaxed regulations. Counselors can help you make choices that do not impact your pension.

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www.kea.org

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members of KEA-Retired*



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KEA-Retired

TODAY/TOMORROW



Reminder.....

Email Kathy Whitlock,
Kathryn.Whitlock@kea.org,
to reserve your spot at the
KEA-Retired Annual meeting
The Galt House, Louisville,
beginning at noon with
buffet lunch.
More details are inside
this newsletter.

