

Summer 2021

COMMUNIQUE

Publication for Members of Central OEA/NEA • Adrienne M. Bowden, President



**The American Rescue Plan
Act Provides
\$122 Billion Relief Funding
for K-12**

**Central OEA/NEA
Local Leadership
Training**

**Internet Safety and the
Ohio Educator Code of Conduct**

**Is Fair School
Funding
Inching Closer
Via the Budget?**

**Summer
Day Trips
to Enjoy**

Rest if You Must, But Keep Advocating for Change

Adrienne M. Bowden (Pickerington EA) Central President and NEA Director

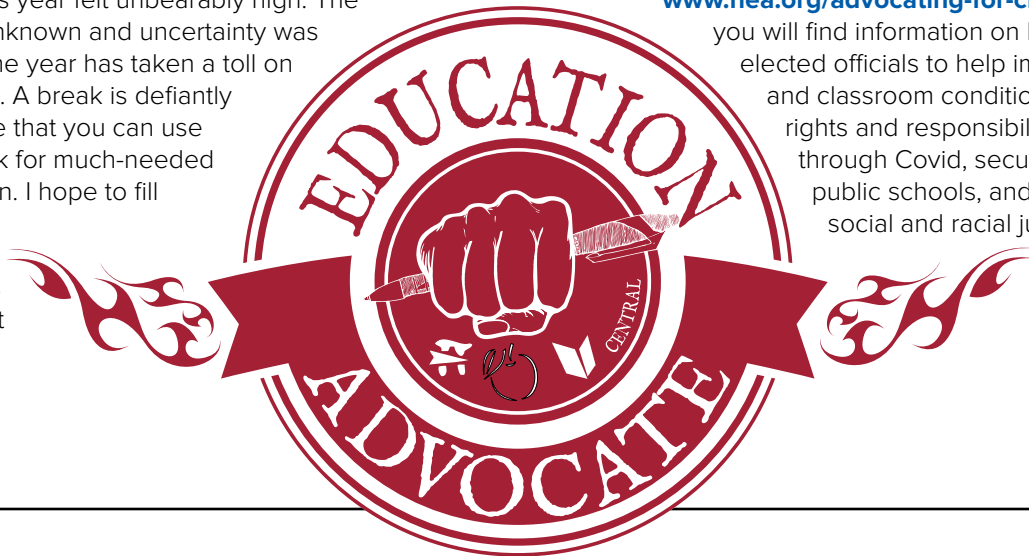
This past school year had been a stressful one, to say the least. Some schools started the year teaching remotely, many others were open from day one for full-time in-person instruction. As educators and support professionals, we entered the school year in uncharted waters. Many of us went without adequate training in distance learning and CDC protocols, we learned how to master new tools and technologies, how to keep students engaged in distracting home environments, and what to do about inequities in social and racial justice that have been made worse by the pandemic.

The stakes for this year felt unbearably high. The stress from the unknown and uncertainty was exhausting and the year has taken a toll on our mental health. A break is defiantly needed! We hope that you can use the summer break for much-needed rest and relaxation. I hope to fill my summer with quality time with family and friends (getting my oldest ready to go to college for his freshman year!).

After recharging your batteries, we must get right back into educating and advocate for the students we serve. Issues and considerations from the beginning of last school year have not gone away. We must work together to dismantle unjust racial and social systems and find a way to fully fund public education in our communities. Now is the time to hold our elected officials accountable and get the needed services and systems in place for the upcoming school year.

A great resource for information on how you can be a part of this effort is NEA's Advocating for Change website

www.nea.org/advocating-for-change. There you will find information on how to advocate elected officials to help improve our school and classroom conditions, navigate our rights and responsibilities as we work through Covid, secure full funding for public schools, and work to advance social and racial justice in our schools and communities.



Cover photo: Franklin Park Conservatory and Botanical Gardens, Columbus, Ohio.

COMMUNIQUÉ

Volume 48, Number 4 • Summer 2021

Published four times a year as a service of

CENTRAL OEA/NEA, INC.

947 Goodale Blvd.
Columbus, OH 43212

Adrienne M. Bowden, President

Jim Templeton, Vice President

Russell Hughlock, Communications & Organizing Coordinator

Editors Ann Eblin, Judy Furnas, Carla Noll

Fiscal Manager Tim Skamfer

Production Russell Hughlock

Design Pam McClung

Phone 614-222-8228

E-mail aa@centraloanea.org

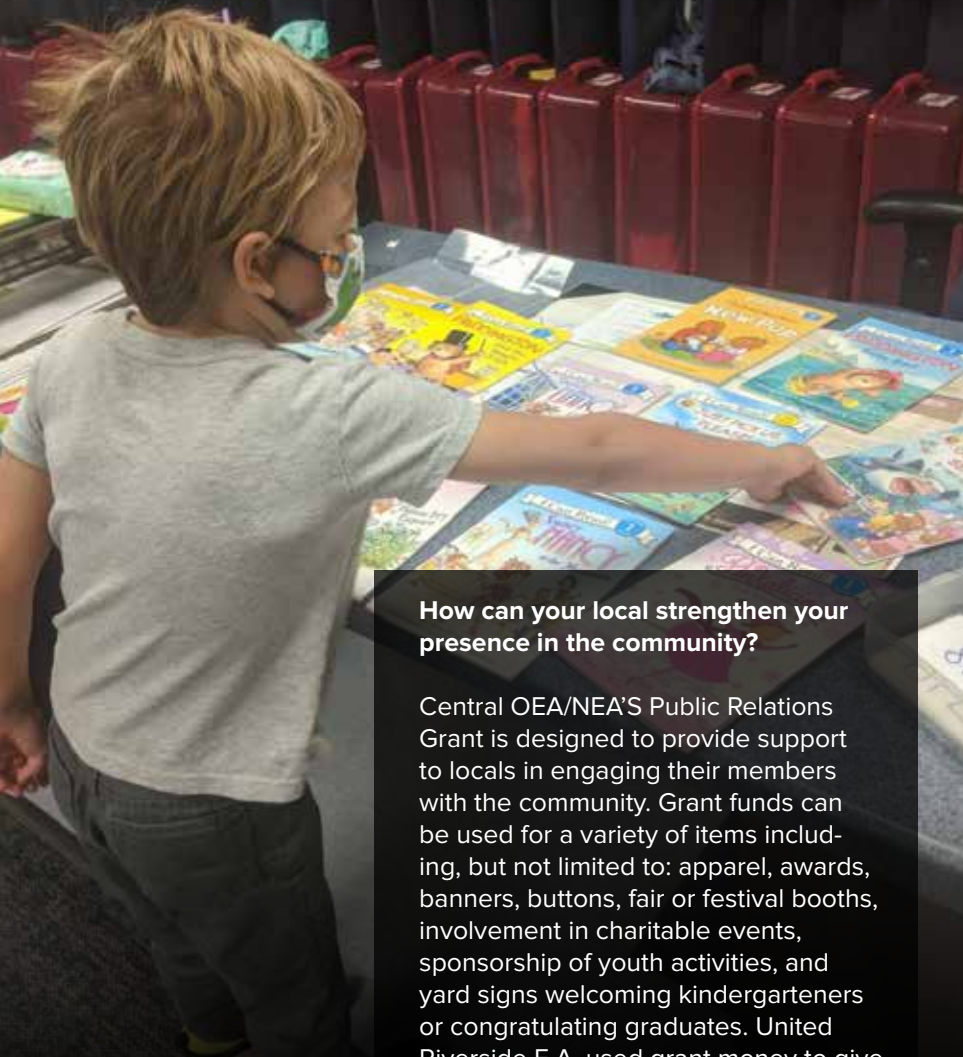
Congratulations to Those Elected to the Central Executive Board

Tammy Shelton (Unit 5), Jeff Caivano (Area 3 Rep), David Jardot (Area 4 Rep), Amy Grittani (Area 5 Rep), Kelly Modlich (Area 5 Rep), and Diana Long (Central ESP Rep) were all reelected to their positions.

Linna Jordan was elected to the vacant OEA Board Unit 8 position, and Geoff Mize was elected to represent OEA Board Unit 1.

We extend our gratitude to outgoing board members Ty Tatman and Mary Kennedy for their service and dedication to Central OEA/NEA and our members.

Just Keep Reading!



How can your local strengthen your presence in the community?

Central OEA/NEA'S Public Relations Grant is designed to provide support to locals in engaging their members with the community. Grant funds can be used for a variety of items including, but not limited to: apparel, awards, banners, buttons, fair or festival booths, involvement in charitable events, sponsorship of youth activities, and yard signs welcoming kindergarteners or congratulating graduates. United Riverside E.A. used grant money to give each pre-school and primary student a book of their own. You can find more information and the brief application on our website.

Our Local Association (United Riverside EA) was able to send a book home with every preschool and elementary student this fall. We received thank you notes from some of the kids that were heartfelt with hand-drawn pictures based on their books. I think this was a huge success that can continue to build strong readers now that the literacy grant has concluded. This was made possible by a grant offered through OEA. We applied and were awarded a Public Relations grant from Central OEA/NEA.

Just Keep Reading! Provided by United Riverside with support from Central OEA/NEA

Recapping the 50th Central Representative Assembly

**Ty Tatman (Zane Trace EA),
OEA Board of Directors**

The 50th Annual Central OEA/NEA Representative Assembly was held Friday, April 23.

Unfortunately, due to the ongoing pandemic, it was once again held virtually. While many delegates lamented being unable to convene in person, 139 delegates and 19 guests did gather on Zoom for an evening of conducting the business of our district association.

Tammy Shelton (Director Unit 5), Jeff Caivano (Area 3 Rep), David Jardot (Area 4 Rep), Amy Grittani (Area 5 #1 Rep), Kelly Modlich (Area 5 #2 Rep), Diana Long (Central ESP Rep) were all elected by acclamation. Linna Jordan was nominated from the floor for the vacant OEA Board of Directors Unit 8 spot and voted in by acclamation. In a hotly contested election, Geoff Mize was elected to represent OEA Unit 1 after an unprecedented third tiebreaker!

A total of four amendments to the Central OEA/NEA Constitution and By-Laws were adopted. They pertain to the use of electronic meetings when necessary, at any level of the association, changing the term "classroom teacher" to "unit member" to be a representative delegate, allowing electronic and mail elections, and Area Representative vacancy appointments to be approved by a 2/3 vote of the Executive Board upon the recommendation of the president.

Many local leaders were recognized for their tireless and benevolent dedication to the union and the students we serve. Doctor Amy Acton was awarded the Friend of Education Award for her courageous leadership at the outset of the pandemic.

Over \$950 was raised for the Fund for Children in Public Education to help our state Political Action Committee, which works to support pro-public education candidates on the ballot. All the decisions that affect us as public-school employees, as well as individuals, are made by elected politicians or individuals appointed by those politicians.

Yes, it's FREE... really

**Guy Kendall-Freas
(NEA Member Benefits)**

Since 1987, the NEA Members Insurance Trust has provided all active members of the Association with FREE life insurance. The NEA Complimentary Life Insurance Program is there, whether you know it or not. The problem is that unless you've designated a beneficiary, there is no paper trail for your family to find and know about this coverage. Equally, it is important that beneficiaries are kept current as life and circumstances change.

And, since 2015, NEA Members Insurance Trust has also been providing the NEA Introductory Life Insurance Plan to all first-time members during their first year of membership. The \$15,000 policy can be continued at a nominal cost after the first year regardless of health. And, if you don't wish to continue it, the policy just automatically cancels after the first year.

Still, only about half of Central members have ever designated a beneficiary. Yet, registering your beneficiary is so simple. You can register or update online at:

www.neamb.com/products/nea-complimentary-life-insurance

If you wish to split a benefit between two or more beneficiaries, designate a charity or other organization, or just have questions about your life insurance, you may call the NEA Member Benefits Member Advocacy Center at 800-637-54636 Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. or on Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 1 pm.

Whoever you choose to be your beneficiary and however you choose to designate your beneficiary, please do it; and then keep it updated.

And, yes, it is FREE... really.

The American Rescue Plan Act Provides \$122 Billion Relief Funding for K-12

Ty Tatman (Zane Trace EA), OEA Board of Directors

Like President Lyndon Baines Johnson's Great Society and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's New Deal before him, recently elected President Joseph R. Biden has set out a robust and ambitious domestic program aimed at relief, recovery, and reform.

President Joe Biden's \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan aimed at fueling the recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic is the latest in a long line of efforts by American leaders to bounce back after a calamity.

As the Covid-19 pandemic caused the sharpest economic downturn since the Great Depression, former President Donald Trump signed off on the \$2.2 trillion CARES Act in March 2020, which sent out stimulus checks of up to \$1,200 to every American, expanded the unemployment safety net and offered loans and grants to small businesses.

The law was meant to get the country through the worst of the pandemic, but as the crisis dragged on with the virus worse than ever, Congress in December approved another \$900 billion measure that included \$600 stimulus checks and an extension of the pandemic unemployment and small business programs.

As he took office in 2021, Biden urged Congress to pass his \$1.9 trillion programs, arguing it was necessary to keep the recovery going. On March 10, 2021, the House passed the Senate bill on a party-line vote of 220–211 (concurring in the Senate amendments), sending the bill to President Biden for his signature. Biden signed the bill the following day, on March 11, 2021.

The American Rescue Plan Act provides \$122 Billion in Covid-19 relief funding for K-12 education. That is a great deal of money considering that FY2021 regular appropriation for K-12 programs was \$42.6 billion. For Ohio, this means \$4.4 billion for education!

States can spend up to 10% of the funds on activities to address learning loss, summer enrichment programs, after-school programs, and administrative costs. That means the states must allocate 90% to local school districts! What public Local, Exempted-Village and City School districts can spend the money on is extremely flexible but can include: technology, sanitation and cleaning supplies, mental health services and support, facility repairs and improvements (like HVAC or adding modular classrooms to adhere to social distancing guidelines), Covid-19 tests, addressing learning loss, instructional materials, curriculum, professional development, additional transportation costs, and additional pay for employees to address Covid related challenges.

The massive influx of funds is intended to help schools return to normal, but could also help start to fix some of the problems that existed before the pandemic. The decentralized nature of the US school system gives Ohio freedom to be creative in how Local Education Agencies spend the money. Not every school will get the same amount.

Continued on page 5.

Central OEA/NEA Local Leadership Training

Mary Kennedy (Hilliard EA President) Membership Development Chair

We are excited to bring leadership training to our local leaders this summer. Are you a local president, vice president, local treasurer, a local association rep, or someone interested in getting more involved? Join us for our annual Leadership Training to be held virtually on June 14 and 15, 2021.

The **President Training** is open to all presidents and/or vice presidents. Even if you've been in office for years, this is a great opportunity to connect and receive a refresher on the nuts and bolts of holding office. We will go through pertinent information about OEA and Central including but not limited to: the newly updated President's Handbook, Central Grants, the importance of FCPE and how to conduct a successful drive, and important information about conducting elections.

The **Association Rep Training** is open to all representatives, no matter the experience. We will cover the role of being a rep, including but not limited to: communicating with members and administration, advocating for members, Weingarten Rights, knowing the different types of power, knowing your collective bargaining agreement, and representing members in those difficult meetings.

The **Treasurers Workshop** will be divided into a 2-hour session for new-ish treasurers and a 1-hour session for experienced treasurers. The novice workshop is intended for treasurers with fewer than five years of experience in that role. The topics will include but not be limited to: membership enrollment, accounting, budgeting, and tax issues.

The experienced workshop is intended for treasurers with five or more years of experience in that role. This workshop assumes knowledge of basic membership enrollment and accounting issues. The workshop topics address practical in-depth knowledge in membership and accounting that may be of help to the participants such as membership reconciliation, early enrollment, and other topics.

Emerging Leaders are the future of the association. We are calling on all members who are interested in getting more involved in Association work. It doesn't matter if you are in your first or twenty-first year, if you have an interest in learning more, we've got a program for you. During this session you will be introduced to the Central OEA Emerging Leaders program, hear about multiple paths of involvement, learn about the NEA/OEA/Central/Local structure and connection, and hear from current Association Leaders about why they are involved. If you are a current Association Leader, part of your responsibility is to build capacity. If you know someone who might need some encouragement to get involved, please share this information and encourage them to sign up for this introduction to Emerging Leaders.

Central members will be able to participate in any or all of the training sessions as they are at different times. We encourage local presidents and vice presidents to attend the treasurers' workshop with your treasurers. Officers need to understand the money aspect of things. If someone else besides your local treasurer handles membership, they may wish to attend the training. We encourage local secretaries and other officers to attend the Association Rep Training to have a better understanding of that role. Find those members whom you want to encourage to get involved and get them to sign up for the Emerging Leaders session. Build that capacity!

We look forward to networking and learning together this summer! Save the dates of June 14 & 15, join us and earn free CEU's.

Information and Registration can be found on Central's website: www.centraloearnea.org.

Register today!

American Rescue Plan Act *continued from page 4.*

The law included some provisions to make sure states and localities do not spend less on education from their budgets than they normally would because schools are getting more federal money. The law directs the states to disburse the money like it does Title I funding, which means more money goes to districts with a higher percentage of low-income families. Ohio is in the unique position of being able to leverage the federal funds into a long-term investment because the amount in the ARP (which can be spent through September

30, 2024), is about the same annual amount as the Fair School Funding Plan promises to boost state aid when it's fully funded in 6 or fewer years.

While most states aren't looking to hire more staff or create the kinds of schools our communities and families would like to see their kids attend, in Ohio we can hire more! It's an exciting time for Ohio!

Curious About Getting Involved in the Union? Join the Emerging Leaders Program!

Ashley Lambacher (Hilliard EA)

Two years ago, I was volunteered by a friend to join the Emerging Leaders program through Central OEA/NEA. To give you some background, I'm quiet, an introvert, and not a "take charge" kind of person, so to have someone suggest I be a part of a program about leaders in the union was scary! I actually thought my friend had lost her mind.

But I had just spent the year as a building representative for my local union, and it was clear I still had much to learn. My curiosity got the better of me, and I trusted my friend, so I decided to attend. Wow -- I am so glad I did! This program opened my eyes and I was able to learn so much about the union at all the different levels. I now have a better understanding of myself and my leadership style, the struggles and victories other unions have dealt with, parliamentary procedures, the roles of different leadership in the union, how the union specifically helps students and teachers in a variety of ways, and various experiences of those in the union from different locals. It also helped me understand more about Central OEA/NEA's committees and where I can best use my skills. (It didn't hurt that there was always a delicious dinner ready to eat, reimbursement for my travel, and gracious and friendly members willing to chat.)

If you are wanting to learn more about the union and how you can get involved, please register for the Emerging Leaders program. As someone who thought they'd be the last person who would be a good fit for such a program, I promise you -- you won't regret it!

It's virtual on June 15 at 1 p.m.

To register:

1. Login (or create an account first if you do not already have one) to Central's website.
2. Scroll down the list of events and select "Emerging leaders training" from the list of events.
3. Select "Going" from the drop-down menu, and wait a moment for it to register. That's it. We will provide a Zoom link to registered participants.

Internet Safety and the Ohio Educator Code of Conduct

Ashley Lambacher (Hilliard EA)

Recently, the Ohio Department of Education revised its Code of Conduct for educators, and page 12 highlights the conduct unbecoming of an educator in regards to technology. This particular page is notable not only because of how important technology has become in our personal and professional lives, but also because it is the most common reason for an educator to be disciplined. Too often have I seen educators use technology in ways that could put their jobs in jeopardy. I recommend reading the full Code of Conduct, but for the purposes of this article, let's break down page 12:

“An educator responsibly creates, uses, consumes, distributes, and protects information and data across all technologies.”

What this means: Always review any digital information or link before you give it to kids, don't give out personal student information (or let them give out identifying information), and always intervene or report to your principal when something inappropriate is accessed.

“Educators shall maintain appropriate boundaries with colleagues, students, and the school community when using technology and electronic communications.”

What this means: Do not engage with students online outside of a professional capacity, and your school devices should be used for school purposes only. Also, remember that anything you put into an email using a school email address is considered public domain, and anyone can request access to the emails you send.

“While maintaining their constitutional rights, educators recognize that when using technology, the words they choose and the content of their statements can reflect negatively on their positions, schools, and the profession.”

What this means: What you post online, even on a personal page, could be used as a reflection of your district and your profession. All it takes is one post to irrevocably damage your reputation as an educator, so be thoughtful about what you put online.

Summer Day Trips to Enjoy

Jillian Kalb (Hilliard EA), Communications Committee Chair

This summer, take a day out, pack a picnic lunch and enjoy some Ohio sites. Below are three possible day trips that you can take with your family, or by yourself. So fill up your gas tank, and hit the road. So have some fun with these picnics and play suggestions.

Our first stop is the Hopewell National Culture Center and Yoctangee Park, Chillicothe area.

Ohio has a rich history of indigenous people, and by visiting Hopewell National Culture Center, you can experience a part of Ohio history. Unfortunately, the visitor center is still closed due to Covid, but you can still tour the grounds and there are many informational signs. After visiting the Hopewell mounds, visit Yoctangee Park in Chillicothe. The name Yoctangee is a Native American word for “paint.” This large park sits adjacent to the Historic First Capital District and features a 12-acre lake, swimming pool, tennis courts, and picnic areas. This is a great park for both children and adults to visit.

Big Muskie and The Wilds-Cumberland Area

A day trip to the east will lead you to The Wilds, and you’ll always have a good time. The Wilds sits on reclaimed land from the Muskingum Mine, which was once one of the largest surface coal mines east of the Mississippi. Over 10,000 acres donated by AEP allow animals such as giraffes, zebras, and rhinos to roam freely through the Ohio hills. After visiting The Wilds, take your picnic lunch and visit Miner’s Memorial Park to see the Big Muskie shovel. The park is a tribute to the miners and their machines, which moved over 3 billion cubic yards of earth – more than 9 times moved during construction of the Panama Canal. The Big Muskie shovel is so big, two Greyhound buses can be parked inside! There are plenty of picnic shelters and a restroom at the park.



John Bryan State Park-The Village of Yellow Springs-Young’s Jersey Dairy

Nestled in between cornfields and sunflowers, you will find the quaint village of Yellow Springs, Ohio. Park your car and enjoy the unique shops, galleries, and restaurants. After strolling the streets and seeing all that Yellow Springs has to offer, head to John Bryan State Park. This 752-acre park has plenty of hiking trails for the nature seeker and playgrounds for the kids. During your visit to John Bryan State Park, make sure you hike through the nearby Clifton Gorge State Nature Preserve. You won’t be disappointed by the beautiful waterfall and scenery. On your way out of town, definitely stop by a local staple, Young’s Jersey Dairy. Great food and ice cream and plenty of things to do with the kiddos. Including a petting zoo and mini-golf.

If you’re interested in more road trips, the state of Ohio has several that you can look at via their website at roadtrips.ohio.org. They have created several different themed trips including To the Moon and Back, Foodies, and Charming Towns to name just a few. This summer pack a picnic and explore the great sites in Ohio!

Is Fair School Funding Inching Closer Via the Budget?

Brittany Alexander (Hilliard EA Vice President)

Each biennium, the Ohio General Assembly must pass a state operating budget. Because this legislation is required by the Ohio Constitution, it is commonplace to have parts of bills, or even whole bills, included within it. On April 22, House Bill 110 (the 2022-2023 operating budget) passed the House by a vote of 70 - 27. The process continues through the Senate Finance Committee and its subcommittees into May or June. Then, a conference committee meets to hammer out the differences between both chambers. The final bill must pass both chambers and be signed before midnight on June 30 by the Governor.

Most noteworthy for students, families, and educators is the inclusion of the Fair School Funding model, with some modifications, in the House-passed version of HB 110. Readers may recall this funding model from the previous General Assembly, or know it as the Cupp-Patterson Formula. The provisions

of HB 110 allow for a phase-in period of six years to fully transition to the new formula. Should the formula remain in HB 110 through its passage, it will fundamentally alter the way state dollars are allocated to districts. In short, the formula calculates many factors to determine the base cost of a high-quality education for different learners. While that may sound impersonal, it is a critical step in determining the state’s share of resources. It is a far cry from our current “system.”

There are a number of other provisions related to education in the House-passed version of HB 110. One key provision would extend the moratorium on creating new Academic Distress Commissions, the legal term for state takeovers, through the 2022 - 2023 school year. In testimony before the Senate Education Committee, OEA President DiMauro urged Senators to include language that would abolish current ADCs in Youngstown, Lorain, and East Cleveland.

COMMUNIQUÉ

Summer 2021



THANK YOU

FOR BEING A MEMBER OF
Central OEA/NEA

You are the true expert in education!

You deserve a voice
in how best to educate our students.

We are here to support you.

Adrienne & Jim,
Central Leadership



Association Benefits

Contract protections during uncertain times
Policy advocacy at the state and federal levels
Quality professional development

Upcoming Events

- Jun 14 Presidents Training
- Jun 14 Treasurer's Workshop for New Treasurers
- Jun 14 Treasurer's Workshop for Experienced Treasurers
- Jun 15 Building Rep Training
- Jun 15 Emerging Leaders Training