

Indiana State Teachers Association ADVOCATE

Volume 45, Issue 6

Fall 2015



The Life of First-Year Teacher, Ms. Teeters

page 5

Our kids. Our schools. Our future.

Delegates to Elect ISTA President, Vice-President, and NEA Board Officer at ISTA RA, April 23

Delegates will hold an election for the ISTA President, Vice President, and one NEA Board of Director position at the 2016 ISTA Representative Assembly on April 23. If you are interested in running for one of these positions, you must notify the Office of the ISTA Executive Director, Dr. Brenda Pike, no later than Nov. 21, 2015 in order for your campaign statement to appear in the winter issue of the Advocate. Candidates must notify Dr. Pike no later than March 1, 2016 in order to declare candidacy at bpike@ista-in.org or 317-263-3301.

Join ISTA Pre-Retired Today!

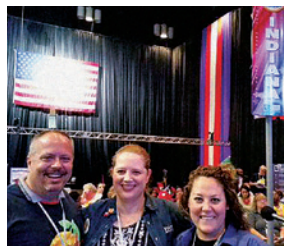
Still thinking about joining ISTA-Retired as a pre-subscribed member? You will continue to have all the privileges and benefits you now enjoy as an active member. Don't forget that ISTA-Retired works for active members as it lobbies in Indianapolis. Think of your pre-retired membership as an investment in your future and the future of public education. Visit ista-in.org/retired to learn how.



Tweets from the NEA Representative Assembly

ISTA retweeted

Ben Yoder @bennyboobooboo • Jul 6
PROUD of @ISTAmembers for 100% participation/donation to @NEAToday Fund for Children and Public Education!! #NEARA15



ISTA retweeted

Jennifer Smith Margr @jkl_smith • Jul 6
@ISTAmembers The entire NEA Resolutions committee team including alternative committee member Randy Studd. #NEARA15



Find us on Facebook: facebook.com/indianastateteachers.



See event photos: flickr.com/photos/indianastate/.

ISTA ADVOCATE

Volume 45, Issue 6, Fall 2015

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The Indiana State Teachers Association Advocate, 150 West Market Street, Suite 900, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2875, is the official publication of the Indiana State Teachers Association, the state level of the United Education Profession. The content of the Association's publications will be consistent with its mission, strategic objectives and policies.



Indiana
State
Teachers
Association

PURPOSE, MISSION AND VALUES

PURPOSE

To advocate for and advance the interests of Indiana's students, educators, and public schools.

MISSION

The Indiana State Teachers Association is a professional association organized to sustain quality public education, improve students' educational opportunities, and advance the professional status of educators.

VALUES

INTEGRITY: Demonstrated by ethical behavior, professionalism, and commitment to stakeholders.

LEADERSHIP: Demonstrated by vision, progressive advocacy, and the resolve to be an inspiration to the future.

FAIRNESS: Demonstrated by a diverse and inclusive professional community that values its democratic, equitable, and empathetic culture.

COLLECTIVE ACTION: Demonstrated by the power of a unified voice, collaborative action, and mutual support.

Tell Your Story

I spent many weeks visiting members around the state this fall, and one of my favorite things was meeting first time education employees as they prepared to start a new adventure in our public schools. For example, I met Bianka Teeters, past Indiana Student Education Association president, at her new teacher luncheon in Plymouth. She was excited, full of energy, and anxious to meet her students. **Remember that feeling, that feeling that drove you to public education in the first place? Let Bianka remind you.**

Join us as we follow Bianka as a first-year teacher on the pages of the Advocate throughout the school year. Beginning with this issue, we will talk to Bianka about her progress, successes, challenges and tips as a new teacher.

We hope her story inspires both new and seasoned educators. Read about how she prepared for the new school year on page five. While she's one of the few brave enough to join our ranks, so many have decided otherwise.

For all the worthy reasons we cite about entering the profession, our colleagues are weary, tired, and burdened. Some are even leaving the profession early, and those who once considered joining, choose otherwise. So for the courageous, why continue?

We show up day after day because we love this work. We show up day after day because we know the future will be better because of what we offer as educators.

Day after day, month after month we show up. We not only show up, we show up and motivate, inspire, and lead.

We have incredible stories to tell—stories of our students' journeys on the paths to their futures, stories of colleagues who, in spite of every challenge, continue to beat the odds. We have reasons for entering and staying in the professions we practice every day, and it is time we share our stories. We have a passion for public education that drives us and keeps us going even in the face of incredible adversity.

So as we prepare for another contentious legislative session and election year, I have a favor to ask—**tell your story.**



Teresa Meredith

Policymakers need to hear from you— your story, your message, your passion for the work you do. You know better than anyone else how laws impact public schools students, some positively, some negatively, but either way, you have the first-hand perspective of what's working and what isn't. So here are a few simple actions you can take that just might make a difference as we prepare for the upcoming legislative session.

1. Call and write your legislators.
2. Invite your legislators to have coffee on a Saturday morning.
3. Invite your legislators experience the work you do in public schools; invite your legislators to spend a day with you on the job.

Let policymakers know why the work you do matters to the kids you serve every single day. **Tell your legislator about the impact that changes in education policies and laws have had on you and more importantly, the impact those changes are having on your students.** Let them know what's working, but also discuss what needs changed.

There is a saying that goes, "If it is about us WITHOUT us, then it ain't for us." We must remind legislators as they head into the session that we are the professionals and we have ideas to offer. **We will not be silent.**

Our voices are powerful and impactful. We have shown over the course of history that when we speak up together, with one voice, the public and policymakers listen. When no one thought Glenda Ritz stood a chance against Tony Bennett we rallied, we campaigned, and we won. Use the issues we face as fuel for change. Change won't come from Indianapolis. **Change will come from the communities where we live, teach, and advocate.** Tell your story.

Teresa Meredith

Professional Resources Center Promotes Effective Teaching and Learning

Mark your calendar and plan to attend a PRC event this year

The research is clear: the quality of a teacher is the most important predictor of student success. So says Stanford University's Linda Darling-Hammond who makes a strong argument for quality professional development by simply stating that each dollar spent on improving teachers' qualifications nets greater gains in student learning than any other use of an education dollar.

Unfortunately, Indiana's lawmakers have not kept the professional development promise to Indiana's teachers, so most professional development across the state is both fragmented and short-term and rarely focused on teaching and learning for students.

Using research on the importance of professional development for its members, ISTA created a teaching and learning center, the Professional Resources Center (PRC). The PRC is a resource and networking center that

promotes and enhances teaching and learning in our public schools.

Through its activities, the PRC encourages educator renewal by promoting teaching and learning in all disciplines and at all grade levels. Working with ISTA staff, local affiliate leaders, and with thousands of other ISTA members, PRC fosters innovation, collaboration, collegiality, and scholarship through a range of programs, services, and resources.

ISTA's PRC is committed to connecting ISTA members with the most current effective practices in professional learning and engagement.

And best of all, participation in all ISTA PRC events and activities is free to all current ISTA members. That's how important the Association feels effective professional learning is to our members. ISTA wants as many teachers engaged in PRC activities and events as possible across the state and across the school year.

Check out upcoming PRC events at ista-in.org/prc for the most current information. ■

Events PRC events are **free** for members

<p>OCT. 16 – 17, 2015 Indiana Student Education Association (ISEA) Annual Conference <i>Registration open.</i> <i>Marriott East Hotel, Indianapolis</i> The focus of this two-day conference is to foster leadership through pre-professional opportunities and provide networking opportunities for our ISEA members and leaders. With thousands of Indiana public school teachers retiring, we must take action to replace these members and ensure there is a quality and caring teacher in every classroom.</p>	<p>OCT. 30 – 31, 2015 Early Career Educator Summit <i>Registration open.</i> <i>Drury Inn Northeast, Indianapolis</i> The focus of this two-day conference is to support teachers with one to five years in the teaching profession. Early educator members are encouraged to bring a non-member colleague to this event. This conference will introduce best practice strategies and techniques to help relatively new teachers in the profession.</p>	<p>FEB. 9, 2016 Evening of Excellence Reception Honoring Hoosier Educators <i>Online registration begins Jan 4, 2016.</i> <i>Drury Inn Northeast, Indianapolis</i> On this evening we will honor and celebrate Indiana's new and current National Board Certified teachers, as well as other award-winning educators, including Indiana Teacher of the Year, Hoosier Educator of the Year, Milken Award Winner(s) and additional honorees.</p>	<p>MARCH 4 – 5, 2016 Second Annual ISTA Good Teaching Conference <i>Online registration begins Jan. 4, 2016.</i> <i>Southport High School, Indianapolis (Tentative)</i> The theme of this conference is "Best Practices for Promoting Engaged Student Learning." Designed by teachers, for teachers, the Good Teaching Conference is designed to support excellent teaching and learning practices for educators.</p>	<p>ONGOING, AS REQUESTED Local and Regional Teaching Cafes The 2015-16 workshop topics include, but are not limited to: Understanding Teacher Evaluations; Understanding Teacher Licensure and Renewal under REPA and REPA 3; Literacy; Writing across the Curriculum; and Implementing Indiana's New College and Career Readiness Standards.</p>
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First-year teacher Bianka Teeters stands outside her third grade classroom at Menominee Elementary School, in Plymouth, Ind.

The Life of a First-Year Teacher

Beginning with this issue of the Advocate, and for each subsequent issue this school year, we will follow Bianka Teeters, former Indiana Student Education Association president, current ISTA member and now first-year teacher, on her journey as an early career educator.

If you walked into third grade teacher **Bianka Teeters'** classroom at Menominee Elementary School in Plymouth the first thing you would notice is that it is brightly lit, and neatly organized. There are five groups of desks packed tightly together, a teal rug nestled in the room's center, and neatly stacked bins and baskets—some full of supplies, some yet to be filled.

Teeters' day begins before the sun lifts over the horizon. She gets to school by 7 a.m. to ensure everything is orderly before the kids saunter into class. After the bell rings she begins the school day with reading block.

"I like this because students are wide-eyed and ready for the day," she said. "Luckily, my students are also eager to read." So far teaching is everything she expected and so much more. "Each day is different and that is what is best about teaching."

Teeters is a planner and didn't merely waltz into her role without a great deal of preparation. Including spending countless hours decorating, organizing materials, creating activities and plans, and much more in anticipation of the moment she would officially step

into the role she'd been eagerly anticipating for some time.

"I wanted to be sure I had my routines and procedures down so that the students could learn them the first few days of school," she said. "I also worked with my mentor to learn the ins and outs of my school."

Mentors are vital to the success of first year teachers and Teeters has leveraged the expertise of a teacher in her building with nearly 20 years' experience.

"When we are lesson planning, I am able to share my ideas and she shares what has been done in the past," she said. "Together as a third grade team, including me, my mentor and another third grade teacher, we plan the lessons we feel will best fit our students."

So why in the challenging teaching environment in Indiana would anyone become a teacher? "I became a teacher to inspire students like I was inspired in second grade," she said. "I want to help students grow and realize the potential they have in this world."

She is under no delusion this path is going to be easy, but the expected rewards far outweigh the challenges. Her only challenge now is balancing her personal and professional lives. "It seems as though I spend every second of my day at school, including the weekends. Once I get in more of a routine, I believe this will become easier," she said.

Her college career and involvement in the Indiana State Teachers Association's affiliate group, the Indiana State Education Association, helped prepare her for teaching.

"I knew I wanted to get involved in my career as early as possible," she said. "I am currently a member because I was able to see the value of membership throughout college."

She sits on the school corporation's negotiations committee and hopes to increase her involvement throughout the year and well into the future.

Check out the next issue of the Advocate to learn more about her journey. ■

Teeters' Top 3 Goals

- 1 Working with families to help students achieve.
- 2 Helping students see how amazing they are.
- 3 Working as a team to best meet the needs of all third graders.

2016 and 2017 NEA Representative Assembly State Delegate Election

The 2016 NEA Representative Assembly will be held in Washington, D.C. The 2017 NEA Representative Assembly will be held in Boston, MA.

Following are election guidelines for State Delegates to the 2016 and 2017 NEA Representative Assembly meetings as approved by the ISTA Board of Directors at its July meeting.

NOMINATION RULES

1. Between October 19, 2015, and November 9, 2015, there will be a period of open nomination for State Delegates.

State Delegates shall be required to participate in Indiana caucus meetings in the city where the Assembly is being held, as well as all sessions of the 2016 and 2017 NEA Representative Assembly meetings (2016 in Washington, DC, July 2-7, and 2017 in Boston, MA, June 30-July 5).

2. NEA Active, Life and Education Support members may participate in the nomination and election of State Delegates. Nominations will be accepted for both Category 1 members and Category 2 members as outlined below.

3. A petition for nomination of approximately 32 State Delegates (final number to be determined by NEA membership records on January 15, 2016) will be provided to all members.

4. Nominations must be made in writing and signed by the nominee. **Education position (Category 1 and 2 must be completed.)** Candidates may list a maximum of three qualifications. Each statement must be six words or fewer.

Category 1 members:

Includes NEA Active members who are not supervisors¹ and NEA Life members who are not supervisors, retired or staff.

Category 2 members:

Includes NEA Active members

who are supervisors¹, NEA retired Life Members², NEA staff Life members, and NEA Active members for life who are part presidents of the Association and who do not meet the requirements for membership set forth in Bylaw 2-1.b.

1. *Supervisor and administrator shall mean any person who has continuing authority to hire, evaluate, transfer, discipline, dismiss, or otherwise direct employees or to effectively recommend any of the aforesaid actions...* (Bylaw 12-1.f.)

2. *NEA members who are eligible to hold an NEA Active Life membership and an NEA Retired membership (either Retired Annual or Retired Life) have a choice. For delegate allocation purposes (as well as others), they may choose to be considered as an NEA Active Life member or an NEA Retired member, but not both. In the absence of notification from the member, NEA will assume that these dual members will maintain their Retired membership for governance purposes and the NEA Active Life membership will be placed in a hold status.*

5. Completed petitions for nomination must be forwarded to the Office of the Executive Director, ISTA, Suite #900, 150 W Market Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204, postmarked on or before midnight, November 16, 2015, or hand-delivered by 4:30 PM on the same day.

6. Persons who nominations are received by the Executive Director as stipulated shall constitute the properly certified candidates.

8. Beginning October 23 and through November 16 all nominated names will be posted and regularly updated on the ISTA website at www.ista-in.org until the deadline.

CAMPAIGN RULES

1. Following close of nominations on November 16, 2015, names and qualifications of all candidates will be published and mailed to all Category 1 and Category 2 members residing in Indiana and contiguous states.

2. The official mailing list of ISTA and/or NEA shall not be made available to any candidate for the purpose of campaigning for an NEA state delegateship.

3. Campaign materials may contain references to ethnic heritage.

4. No local, district, state or national dues money may be used to promote the candidacy of an individual or groups of individuals.

ELECTION RULES

1. The election for State Delegates and Successor Delegates to the 2016 and 2017 NEA Representative Assembly meetings is for a two-year term and shall be conducted between February 10 and March 2, 2016.

2. Ballots will be distributed in February 2016, to all Category 1 and Category 2 members residing in Indiana and contiguous states whose membership forms have been processed by NEA.

3. Names will be placed on the ballot in order as drawn from a common receptacle by the Executive Director or agent with appropriate witnesses.

4. Each ballot shall contain a list of the properly certified candidates. No other information about candidates may be included on the ballot.

5. Each eligible member may vote for any number of

candidates not to exceed 32 Category 1 and two Category 2 (or final number to be determined by NEA records). Any ballot on which more votes appear than the total allowed in a given category shall not be counted for that category only.

6. Ballots must be returned in the official ballot envelope marked "Delegate Ballot" which has been placed inside another envelope. MEMBERS ARE REQUIRED TO USE THE ENVELOPE SUPPLIED WITH THEIR RETURN ADDRESS ON THE OUTSIDE ENVELOPE TOMAKE MEMBERSHIP VERIFICATION POSSIBLE.

7. Only official ballots meeting these rules which are received by the Office of the Executive Director, ISTA, Suite #900, 150 W Market Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204, postmarked on or before midnight March 2, 2016, or hand-delivered by 4:30 PM on the same date shall be counted.

8. The ballots shall be separated from outside mailing envelopes, tabulated and certified by the designated counting agency.

9. Results of the election shall be determined by the above agency in the following manner:

- The top 32 candidates (or final number to be determined by NEA records) in Category 1 receiving in rank order a plurality of votes cast shall be declared State Delegates.

- The top two candidates (final number to be determined by NEA records) in Category 2 receiving a plurality of the votes cast shall be declared State Delegates, if applicable.

- Successor Delegates (alternates) shall be all those candidates receiving a plurality in each category in rank order following the certified delegates.

10. All certified State Delegates and Successor Delegates shall be notified of their rank order

by email as soon as possible after the results are known.

11. Notification of Indiana's certified State Delegates and Successor Delegates shall be sent by ISTA to NEA Membership Records Office by May 15, 2016.

12. Names of all certified State Delegates shall be published and made available to all local associations.

13. If a member is elected as both a Local and State Delegate,

the member must notify the local affiliate and ISTA in writing of the position accepted and the one refused within five days after being notified by ISTA by email of being elected as a State Delegate. Acceptance of one position relinquishes claim to the refused position. Failure to comply with this rule results in the State Delegate position declared vacant.

14. Each certified State Delegate shall receive funds for expenses as allocated in the ISTA budget.

15. Ballots shall be impounded by ISTA for two years.

CHALLENGE RULES

Any challenge to these rules or any activity or result governed by them shall be submitted in writing to the Office of the Executive Director, ISTA, Suite #900, 150 West Market Street, Indianapolis, IN, 46204, by April 10, 2016.

If necessary, the ISTA Executive Committee will meet to review

and act upon any submitted challenges. Any Executive Committee member who is a candidate for a position involved in a challenge shall be ineligible to participate as an Executive Committee member in the pertinent deliberations.

The Office of the Executive Director will notify all involved parties of Executive Committee action.

Adopted by the Board of Directors July 25, 2015

Petition For Nomination

For Candidates for ISTA State Delegate to 2016 and 2017 NEA Representative Assembly Meetings

I hereby declare my candidacy as ISTA State Delegate to the 2016 and 2017 NEA Representative Assembly meetings.

CANDIDATE INFORMATION *These fields are required in order for this Registration Form to be processed.

*First Name Middle Name/Initial *Last Name

ISTA ID # Local Association

*Home Mailing Address

*City *State *Zip: Preferred

Phone (circle one) Home School Cell

School Email Home Email

Education Position: (must circle one) Category 1* Category 2**

*Category 1: Includes NEA Active members who are NOT Supervisors and NEA Life members who are not supervisors, retired or staff.
**Category 2: Includes NEA Active members who are supervisors, NEA retired Life members, NEA staff Life members, and NEA Active members for life who are past presidents of the Association and who do not meet the requirements for membership set forth in Bylaw 2-1.b

You may list three Association activities. Each statement must be six words or fewer.

- 1.
2.
3.

SEND TO: Office of the Executive Director ATTN: CANDIDATE NOMINATION 150 West Market Street, Suite 900 Indianapolis, IN 46204

Signature of Nominee

Postmarked on or before midnight November 9, 2015, or hand-delivered by 4:30 p.m. on the same date. PLEASE WRITE "CANDIDATE NOMINATION" ON YOUR ENVELOPE.

Teacher Shortage: Why and What We Can Do

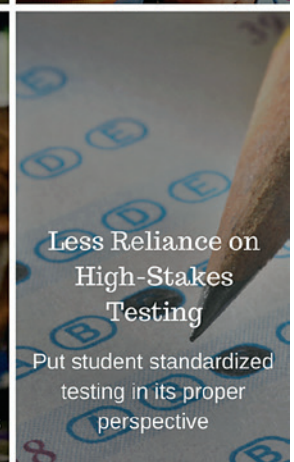
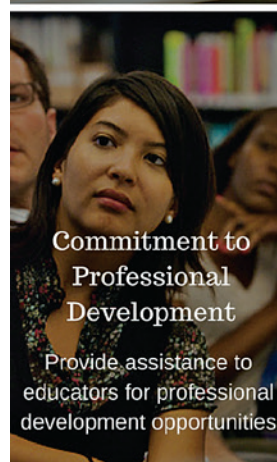
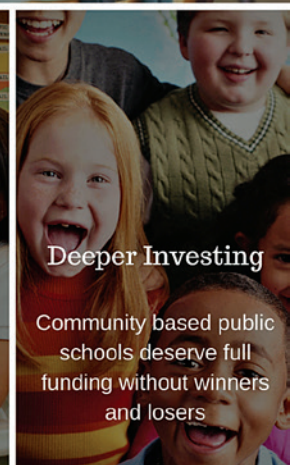
Indiana's teacher shortage is real. The percentage of all teachers getting a teaching license fell by more than 50 percent from 2009 – 10 to 2013 – 14 and there's a 19 percent decline in the number of licenses issued to new teachers during the same period, according to a recent Indiana Department of Education report.

There's been a fundamental failure by policymakers and partisan appointees to recognize and respect both the collective and individual expertise, experience, value, and dedication of Indiana's teachers. Nobody—including the Indiana State Teachers Association—believes that there is one singular reason for the shortage.

A few key factors:

- Teachers may have an idea what their beginning salary might be, but they have little expectation of knowing what their career salary will look like.
- Teachers are annually evaluated under state law in significant part based on their student's standardized test scores.
- The impact of teachers' collective voice as professionals in a school system has been narrowed to a few salary and wage issues and muted when it comes to the very things that brought them into teaching in the first place—with regard to the learning conditions of their students.
- Teachers watched a state superintendent of public instruction who came up through the ranks of teaching be lambasted and her office statutorily weakened for no other reason than her priorities differed.
- Teachers waited to receive their "performance" stipend well past six months after the school year in which they earned it and will likely wait again due to more delayed test scores.
- Teachers watched the annuity rate on their pension be reduced.

It looks more and more like it is a career choice that too many are avoiding for something that can offer more in the way of professional respect and income. Let's



hope we can turn some of these dynamics around and create the environment and support that will encourage existing teachers to remain in the classroom and aspiring teachers to join the profession.

Because, on the plus side of the ledger—and it is a huge plus—teachers still get the chance to impact the future. ■