

## Educators Learn How to Create Welcoming and Inclusive Classrooms for Students at Gender Diversity Workshop



The Kenosha Education Association is always looking for ways to provide opportunities to both educators and students that make them feel appreciated for who they are and prepared to take on challenges they face in and outside of the classroom. With a sudden increase of bullying incidents at some of the schools, KEA recognized there was a need to educate its members about how to keep their classrooms a safe and inclusive space for their students. As a result, KEA collaborated with GSAFE Wisconsin, an organization whose mission is to create just schools for LGBTQ+ youth in Wisconsin, to host an exclusive,

members only workshop that would help attendees learn how to navigate an often times sensitive topic.

The 90-minute session taught participants to understand the differences and connections between assigned sex, gender identity, and sexual orientation, and also outlined simple day-to-day practices educators can use to demonstrate an awareness of gender diversity.

Beth Djuplin, a middle school teacher and KEA member who attended the seminar, stated, "...The gender workshop was a life-changer for me. The question about describing your gender without describing what you look like or what

you do...that was the epiphany moment. I just am."

Despite an impending winter storm, members trekked to the KEA office with an eagerness to learn and engage in meaningful and reflective conversation.

GSAFE Senior Director of Education and Policy and workshop presenter, Brian Juchems, said, "It was heartening to see a committed group of educators in various roles come out during an ice storm to learn how to create gender inclusive schools that are safe and welcoming not just for transgender but for all students. The audience was engaged, informed, and ready to take action. Congrats to the Kenosha Education Association and its members for creating this opportunity."

The Kenosha Unified School District is currently in the midst of a discrimination lawsuit involving a transgender student, making it impossible for them to create and provide non-discrimination policies and practices for LGBTQ+ students until after it is settled. The KEA is focused on making sure educators and students of Kenosha are being provided with the resources they need to be effective in the classroom and decided to step in and provide a workshop that would benefit everyone.

KEA plans to host more educational events like this in the future with the hope that the takeaways will be just as positive and useful for its members as this one was. "I'm so glad KEA put on this session," another participant said. "I learned so much - this is something that all teachers should be taught and talking about."

# Financial Strategies to Help with the Burden of a Pay Gap

As many of you may know, we have learned that the Kenosha Unified School District (KUSD) will be adjusting its pay periods and may result in some staff experiencing a pay gap. This means that Thursday, Aug. 17 will be the last paycheck you receive for the 2016-17 school year. Your first paycheck for the 2017-18 school year will be deposited on Wednesday, Sep. 13. We understand that going a month without pay may be difficult for some staff, and that if this is your first time experiencing a pay gap, it may also be a little confusing.

The financial and emotional well-being of our members is important, which is why we have provided some financial strategies to help deal with a gap in pay periods. If you would like more clarity about the situation, please feel free to call the KEA office at 262-654-2127 or 262-654-2128.

## Educators Credit Union

If you are not currently an Educators Credit Union member, you can open an account at an Educators branch or online at [www.ecu.com](http://www.ecu.com).

- Educators Credit Union members can set up a payroll deduction into a special

savings account. This would automatically draw a predetermined amount of money from your direct deposit and place it into a savings account created to hold those funds. Members can set up this process using online banking, by visiting a branch and speaking with a member finance representative, or by calling the Educators' Member Response Center at 262-886-5900.

- Members may take out a short-term personal loan. These loans require a check of your credit score. There is no prepayment penalty.

- Members may apply for a Rapid Relief Loan. This loan uses a member's direct deposit history to determine the loan amount. Rapid relief loans have a term of 6-months at an 18.9% interest rate.

## Member Benefits Individual Financial Consultations

As a member of KEA, you have access to free financial consultations with Marty Richards from WEA Member Benefits. Marty is great a resource for people who are looking for overall budgeting and saving advice or for those interested in retirement and need help figuring out next steps. Marty will be

available for onsite 30-minute consultations at the KEA office on the following dates:

- March 6 between 3:30pm and 6:30pm
- March 9 between 3:30pm and 6:30pm

If you are interested in registering for a free 30-minute consultation, please visit <http://bit.ly/keafree30>

## Donors Choose

Donors Choose is a program that makes it easy for educators to request supplies for their classrooms. Donors from all over the country choose projects to fund and make it possible for educators to provide resources and experiences for their students that they may not have otherwise been able to do.

Because the gap in pay is happening right before the start of the school year when educators are buying supplies for their classrooms, posting a Donors Choose project before the end of the school year is a potentially great way to avoid some out-of-pocket costs.

The KEA Teaching and Learning Center has an informational workshop about Donors Choose that provides attendees with guidance and advice for creating successful, fully-funded projects. If you are interested in learning more or having a Donors Choose workshop at your school, contact the KEA office at 262-654-2128 or email Kendra Koeppen at [koeppen@weac.org](mailto:koeppen@weac.org).

**Educators Credit Union**

*[www.ecu.com](http://www.ecu.com)*

**Individual Financial Consultations**

*<http://bit.ly/keafree30>*

**Donors Choose**

*[www.donorschoose.org](http://www.donorschoose.org)*

## Proposes to Reduction in Force Policy Would Require More Unpaid Time From Teachers

The District is in the process of considering changes in the handbook about the Reduction in Force policy. While the District has delayed taking any action until further employee input, it is important to know that some of the initial language proposals are heavily weighted on factors that discriminate against families with after school obligations and/or special needs children or family members, and promotes heavy subjective principal influence.

The new proposed policy would require staff to develop a layoff portfolio based on six criteria: quality of service (extracurricular activities); years of service in your department; professional development and growth;

additional licenses; discipline (verbal or written); and documented concerns. Hypothetically, if you didn't meet the expectations of one of these criteria, you would be 16% more likely to be laid off per criteria expectations you did not meet.

These proposals would require teachers to perform extra, unpaid work outside of the school day. This would be in addition to unpaid prep time that educators are already performing.

You should have received notification from the District that a digital survey is in the process of being created regarding this issue and will be distributed to staff sometime in

the near future. We want to encourage you to be open and honest about how policy changes such as these would not be fair to your families or your students.

You can also visit our Action Network page to send a letter to all seven School Board members about this issue. You'll see we've composed some example letters that you can send word for word, or you can edit them to make them your own.

This is a quick and easy way to let the board know that our voices and stories matter. Many of you have already used this tool to send letters, and it is making an impression; keep making your voices heard. We believe there is a more uniform and objective way to determine layoffs, and if you do too, visit the Action Network Page today: <http://bit.ly/layoffpolicy>.

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## NEA FOUNDATION'S GLOBAL FELLOWSHIP

### *Timing is ticking to apply!*

For the first time, the NEA Foundation is accepting applications from all active NEA classroom teachers for its 2018 Global Learning Fellowship.

Members are eligible for this opportunity-of-a-lifetime, to receive 12 months of fully-funded professional development and participate in a nine-day field study abroad! The goal of the fellowship is to support educators as they build global competency skills and create their own lesson plans to share with educators around the world.

**The deadline to apply is February 28, 2017.**

**To apply, please visit [www.neafoundation.org/pages/global-learning-fellowship/](http://www.neafoundation.org/pages/global-learning-fellowship/)**

## General Membership Meeting

Thursday, March 2 at 4:30 p.m. at UAW Local 72

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## Calendar of Events

### Elementary School Prep Time Meeting

Monday, February 27  
(4:15 p.m., KEA Office)

### Regular School Board Meeting

Tuesday, November 28  
(7:00 p.m., ESC)

### General Membership Meeting

Thursday, March 2  
(4:30 p.m., UAW Local 72)

### Individual Consultations

Monday, March 6  
(Registration Required: [bit.ly/](http://bit.ly/))

### Preparing for Retirement Seminar

Tuesday, March 7  
(5:00 p.m., KEA Office)

### Individual Consultations

Thursday, March 9  
(Registration Required, [bit.ly/](http://bit.ly/))

### Board of Directors Meeting

Monday, March 13  
(4:30 p.m., KEA Office)

### Association Representative Assembly Meeting

Thursday, March 16  
(4:30 p.m., KEA Office)

### Culturally Responsive Practices to Engage Student Resistance

March 23 and March 30  
(Registration and Times to Come)

## Local Delegates to Be Elected to Attend the WEAC and NEA RAs

Interested in learning more about the WEAC and the NEA? Plan on being a local delegate to the 2017 WEAC Representative Assembly (RA) and/or the 2017 NEA-RA. You can see firsthand how your professional associations work. You will see how the resolutions, bylaws, and constitutional changes originate. You will meet with other education leaders in Wisconsin and at the national level to consider the future of public education.

Locally we will elect 9 KEA and 1 KEA-ESP delegates to attend the WEAC-RA held in Stevens Point on April 22, 2017. Also, we will elect 3 KEA teacher delegates to attend the NEA-RA in Boston, Massachusetts, on June 30 – July 5, 2017.

**Elections for both RAs will take place on Friday, March 17, 2017. Nomination forms are available now and must be filed at the KEA office by Friday, March 10, 2017.**

## KEA Scholarships Now Available

The annual Kenosha Education Association Scholarships are now accepting applications. A scholarship in the amount of \$1,500 will be awarded to a student entering into a four-year college/university program; a \$500 scholarship will be awarded to a student entering a two-year associate degree or technical school program. Scholarships will be awarded based on scholarship, service, leadership, and public spirit.

Any KUSD high school senior is eligible to apply, excluding students who are eligible for or are receiving the Governor's Wisconsin Academic Excellence Scholarship. Students receiving full tuition scholarships at any institution are ineligible.

**Applications may be obtained from high school guidance offices as well as from the KEA office. The deadline for application is Friday, May 5th, 2017.**

## KEA Office Hours and Contact Information

**Hours:** Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Location:** 5610 55th Street, Kenosha, WI

**Phone:** 262-654-2127 / 262-654-2128

**Anne Knapp, President** - [knappa@weac.org](mailto:knappa@weac.org)

**Chris Perillo, Interim Executive Director** - [perilloc@weac.org](mailto:perilloc@weac.org)

**Website:** [kea.weac.org](http://kea.weac.org)

**Facebook:** [www.facebook.com/kenoshaeducationassociation](http://www.facebook.com/kenoshaeducationassociation)

**Twitter:** @KEAUnion