Standing up for public ed

Members help defeat bad legislation
Legislative wrap up

While education did not receive any new money in next year’s budget, OEA members made a difference by helping defeat some bad bills. Read all the details in our Legislative Wrap Up.

Page 2 OEA members stepped up and prevented some bad bills from becoming reality. Read about OEA’s Priority Bills and how those that passed will affect you as an education employee.

Page 3 The 2012 Legislature ignored an opportunity to help education recover from three years of cuts.

Pages 4-5 Education received a lot of attention during the Legislative Session, including bills on alternative certification, the maximum number of days a noncertified substitute can teach, and continuing education for school board members. Read about some of the education bills that have been signed by the governor.

Page 7 OEA’s Tulsa TLE Model Cadre can help your faculty prepare for the new evaluation system by bringing professional development to your district.

Page 8 Participants at July’s Summer Leadership Academy will learn how to “navigate change in challenging times.”

On the cover... Lisa and Josh Edge brought their son Luke to the Stand Up for Public Education Rally and Luke wore a t-shirt to prove it. Lisa is a member and teacher at Norman’s Eisenhower Elementary. Connie Jensen, Luke’s “MiMi,” SW-E director and a teacher at Newcastle Elementary, made the shirt.

Join the conversation with OEA!
On Facebook –
  • Oklahoma Education Association
  • Student Oklahoma Education Association
  • Oklahomans for Great Public Schools
On Twitter –
  • twitter.com/okea

Need help? Call us.
Do you need assistance with a personnel matter? Would you like to invite an OEA Teaching and Learning Specialist to provide professional development in your building? Does your Association need organizing help? Call your regional office and ask for help.

Oklahoma City Metro, Southeast and Southwest Teams
800/522-8091 or 405/528-7785
Northeast and Tulsa Metro Teams
800/331-5143 or 918/665-2282
Northwest Team
800/439-0393 or 580/256-0071
Working in political campaigns strengthens your voice at the Capitol

By Linda Hampton
OEA President

Yard signs, media ads and debates – all indicators of the impending political elections. Whether you enjoy campaigns or wait anxiously for the voting to end, there’s no denying the importance and impact of elections when it comes to public education.

There’s also no denying the impact you can have on the outcome of the elections.

As you well know, being 48th in the nation in salaries usually means we can’t compete with deep-pocketed groups, but we can stand up to wealthy groups and beat them hands down in grassroots organizing. Simply put, we have the potential to provide more volunteers than almost any other group.

There are thousands of public schools employees in Oklahoma, and each teacher and staff professional has a wide group of people who respect and listen to them. From a candidate’s point of view, that’s a lot of votes!

Our ability to influence voters brings a tremendous amount of political clout, but maintaining that high level of influence requires diligence and action on our part.

It requires a close look at the positions and attitude a candidate has about our profession and public education. If an incumbent candidate has supported public education, this is your opportunity to say thank you by supporting them at every opportunity with your time, your recommendation and your support.

Ask candidates questions about their positions regarding public education, and then do what you do best – educate them. Tell them about what you do daily to give every Oklahoma student an opportunity to have a better future. Provide them a verbal picture of public education and how it looks from “your side of the desk.” Let them know the difference you and your colleagues make in a child’s life.

The most important way to help a candidate is to volunteer your time. Candidates value those people who help them by knocking on doors, stuffing envelopes, putting out yard signs, hosting fund-raisers, etc. Spending one morning, afternoon or evening volunteering definitely earns a big return on the investment of your time.

Human nature is to listen to those you know and trust. By helping to get a candidate elected you have earned their trust. You become their expert on public education – their “go to” person. So during the legislative session, even while you’re busy at school, your voice is being heard at the Capitol.

You can also become involved by volunteering to serve on an OEA candidate interview team, which makes recommendations about candidates based on their positions regarding public education. It is a great way to learn first-hand what each candidate thinks about our profession and public education.

I recently read a very powerful quote by E. Andrews: “Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.” What a true statement! To each of you I say thank you for what you do and will do. You do it with very little extra time or money, and, most importantly, you do it because you have a heart for public education and Oklahoma’s children.

Coming this fall – permanent membership cards

When members receive their membership cards at the beginning of school in August, it will be the last OEA card they need.

OEA will be distributing permanent membership cards through local association leaders this year. The card will have the member’s name and official identification number on the front.

No temporary or generic cards will be provided for new members joining this fall. Instead, OEA will print their permanent cards in December.

In future years, OEA will only print membership cards mid-year for new members and for continuing members who have lost cards.
OEA members step up and prevent bad bills from becoming reality

By Kandis West

The bases were loaded in the bottom of the ninth inning and it appeared that education opponents were about to hit a home run and bring everyone in to celebrate the big win. Not so fast. The Oklahoma Education Association’s 35,000 members had some major defensive plays up their sleeves.

While hard-fought rights like collective bargaining, payroll deduction and leave benefits were being snatched away across the country, Oklahoma school employees soundly defeated those measures. Take a look below at some of OEA’s Priority Bills that passed and failed and what they mean to you.

Bills that passed

Senate Joint Resolution 52: How it impacts you: The bill could eliminate yet another funding source for education. SJR 52 attempts to eliminate property taxes on all intangible property. Currently, about 60 percent of that tax revenue goes to fund common education. The people will have the final say. SJR 52 will be on the November ballot.

Senate Bill 1959: How it impacts you: The bill ensured National Board Certified Teachers received their $5,000 stipend for this current year only.

House Bill 2623: How it impacts you: The bill forces teachers convicted of any felony to forfeit their teacher retirement.

Bills that failed

Senate Bill 1530: The school deregulation bill that could have reduced all salaries to the state minimum, eliminated collective bargaining, class size restrictions, and personal and sick leave.

House Bill 3089: An unfunded mandate that would have required teachers to work about 8.5 percent more time without an increase in pay. The bill would have increased the instructional day from a minimum of 6 hours to 6.5 hours per day.

House Bill 3111: The bill would have eliminated payroll deduction or assessed a 2 percent fee to collect Association dues in an effort to weaken your professional association. The bill unfairly targeted employee associations, while letting other nonprofit groups, private businesses and insurance companies to continue to use payroll deduction without a fee.

Senate Bill 1879: The bill would have severely limited the National Board Certified Teacher program. The NBCT stipend would be phased out in 10 years in favor of creating a revolving pay-for-performance fund to reward teachers based on the new Teacher Leader Effectiveness Evaluation System.

No new tax cuts

A strong effort to cut the personal income rate failed at the end of the session when two different proposals – one in the House and another in the Senate – both failed to reach the governor’s desk.

OEA was part of a coalition organized by the Oklahoma Policy Institute to defeat the proposals. In the end, enough legislators from both sides of the aisle decided now was not the time to further cut state revenue. Your calls and emails played a big part in keeping revenue that is so important to schools.
Common Ed receives flat appropriation

By Kandis West

Common education’s share of total state funding is at its lowest level in 20 years, according to the Oklahoma Policy Institute, and the 2012 Legislature ignored an opportunity to help education recover from three years of cuts.

In the past three years, school funding from the state has been slashed by 10 percent. Oklahoma has eliminated 1,500 teaching positions during that time while enrolling 22,000 more students.

Common education was appropriated $2.3 billion by the legislature this session, which is about $250 million less than it received just three years ago.

“We are going backwards. We are receiving less money, while trying to educate more students. Legislators had an opportunity to make education whole by replacing money lost over the last three years, but chose not to do so,” said Lela Odom, Oklahoma Education Association Executive Director.

OEA President Linda Hampton said this year’s budget has a direct impact on teachers, students and parents.

“With fewer teachers and support staff, class sizes are rising and students have fewer course options like Advanced Placement classes or foreign language electives,” Hampton said.

District leaders say they will have to scramble to figure out what teachers and programs to cut. Legislators denied a request by school leaders for a $50 million increase to save teaching positions.

There was some good news in the legislative budget. By passing HB 3056, the legislature did appropriate full funding for the Flexible Benefit Allowance (FBA), which pays individual health insurance premiums for education employees.

Early in the final week, it was reported that State Supt. Janet Barresi would be given one third of the $33 million line item for text books to fund other programs. But the House passed SB 1816, restoring $30 million to schools for text books, and SB 1435, which replaced the final $3 million.
Signed, sealed, delivered

Education bills signed by Gov. Fallin

Following is a list of some of the education related bills from the Spring 2012 session signed by the governor, along with a short description and the date at which the measure will become law. Visit the Members Only section of okea.org to see the complete list, including additional details to some of the measures shown in this article.

HB 3090 – Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarships for Students with Disabilities Program. This bill changes the name of the Rethinking Special Education Statewide Cooperative Task Force to the Rethinking Special Education Competency and Transition Task Force and outlines the focus of the task force. The measure also clarifies that acceptance of a Lindsey Nicole Henry Scholarship will have the same effect as parental revocation of consent to service through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and that the amount of a scholarship will be proportionate to the number of school days remaining if the scholarship is granted after the beginning of the school year. Effective upon signing, May 30, 2012.

HB 2684 – Larry Dickerson Education Flexible Benefits Allowance Act in reference to support professionals. This bill amends the definition of support personnel in this act to include those who work a minimum of six hours per day for a minimum of 1,032 hours per year. Effective July 1, 2012.

HB 2676 – Establishes the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program. This bill directs the State Board of Education to establish the Oklahoma Bridge to Literacy Program. The program provides for grants to be awarded on a statewide basis, to the extent possible, for the purpose of providing reading instruction to children through the fourth grade. Eligible applicants include nonprofit organizations; community-based programs, centers, organizations or services; and churches or religious organizations. Program scope is currently broad, as the measure does not detail the number of grants to be provided, the amount of each grant, the materials to be purchased, or the number of employees that are to be funded. Effective upon signing, May 30, 2012.

HB 2494 – Advanced Placement courses to be used for a school’s letter grades. This bill specifies participation and scores in Advanced Placement courses will be used to help determine the letter grade a school will receive through the state’s letter grades for schools system. It also specifies that technology center courses granted college alliance credit and science, technology, engineering and mathematics courses taken at regional sites of the Oklahoma School of Science and Mathematics also will be used to determine letter grades for schools. Effective for 2012-13 School year.

HB 2330 – Background checks. This bill allows any agency, board, commission, higher education institution, career technology or common education institution to use third-party vendors to conduct background and employment screening checks. Also, includes credentials for companies performing background checks. All fingerprinting requests will go through the OSBI. Effective November 1, 2012.

HB 2511 – Further defining reading screening requirements. This bill further defines the requirement for children in kindergarten, first, second and third grade to be screened for reading skills including, but not limited to, phonological awareness, letter recognition and oral language skills as identified in the Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS) adopted by the State Board of Education at the beginning of each school year. Effective upon signing, May 15, 2012.

SB 1443 – Extends time mandates can be ignored without penalty. This bill extends the time that ignoring certain mandates will not result in penalties until June 30, 2014. The mandates include media program standards, the State Department of Education assessing financial accreditation penalties, certain advisory council penalties and textbook adoption. Effective upon signing, May 10, 2012.

SB 1565 – Establishes dyslexia teacher training pilot program. This bill intends for the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to establish an extensive dyslexia teacher training pilot program by entering into a contract with a non-profit education center. This program is contingent upon securing of grant funding. The bill also describes the details and intent of the program. Effective upon signing, May 10, 2012.

HB 3000 – Continuing education for local school board members. This bill requires school board members to meet the continuing education requirements in order to be reappointed or re-elected to the school board. If they do not meet the requirements they will not be allowed to serve on the school board for a certain period of time. Effective upon signing, May 7, 2012.
HB 2970 – Appeals process for students denied a standard diploma. The bill requires the State Board of Education to establish an appeals process for students denied a standard diploma for failing to score proficient or higher on four EOIs. Students have 30 days after denial to file a petition for appeal with the State Board, which is required to take action no later than 45 days after it receives the petition. Effective upon signing, April 18, 2012.

HB 2244 – Alternative certification GPA requirements. The bill requires that a person must have a retention grade point average of not less than 2.50 on a 4.0 scale rather than a cumulative grade point average for the State Board of Education to grant an alternative placement teaching certificate. Effective November 1, 2012.

HB 2727 – Max days for non-certified substitute teachers. The bill instructs school districts to adopt a policy on the maximum number of days a substitute teacher without a valid certificate may work in the same assignment. The measure removes the cap of no more than 20 days at the same assignment for substitutes without certificates. Effective November 1, 2012.

HB 2623 – Felons forfeit retirement. The bill requires any member of the Teachers’ Retirement System of Oklahoma convicted of a felony to forfeit all retirement benefits. This excludes the members who received a deferred sentence where the retirement benefits will not begin before they have completed the deferred sentence. This also applies to a member, even after leaving contributory employment, if convicted of a specific listed felony committed while being a school employee. Effective November 1, 2012.

SB 1228 – Transfers to districts for online courses. The bill removes a specific provision for the implementation of supplemental online courses by the State Department of Education. The provision states an electronic student transfer system which does not require the student desiring to transfer to another district for enrollment in an online course to personally appear in the district to which the transfer is sought. Effective upon signing, April 9, 2012.

NBCTs Standing Up for Public Education
Bonnie Stone, a National Board Certified teacher at Lewis and Clark Elementary in Tulsa, introduces herself during the Stand Up for Public Education rally. NBCTs and local Teachers of the Year were presented to the crowd during the rally. (Photo by Doug Folks)

HB 2285 – Additional alternative certification certificates. The bill extends the deadlines for teachers with certain certifications to be alternatively certified in other areas from July 1, 2012 to July 1, 2014. This will be allowed in the following areas: elementary education teachers to be alternatively certified in early childhood education; early childhood education teachers to be alternatively certified in elementary education; special education teachers to be alternatively certified in early childhood or elementary education; traditionally certified teachers and teachers certified through Troops to Teachers to become alternatively certified in special education. Effective upon signing, April 9, 2012.

HB 2516 – Requirements & recommendations for health and medical or reading concerns. The bill provides that students who were to be retained due to reading deficiencies can be promoted if the principal recommends it based upon alternative assessments or portfolio work. Teachers may recommend promotion of students if they participate in a summer academy or other program. These measures will apply to students with IEPs and students who are English language learners who have been determined to not be proficient. Kindergarten students will be assessed at the beginning of the school year for reading skills. A school district will no longer be allowed to recommend medical evaluation for students if they are not reading at the appropriate level and teachers are concerned that the reason could be undiagnosed health issues. Effective upon signing, May 1, 2012.
When the Oklahoma Education Association is planning an event, the Oklahoma Educators Credit Union (OECU) is one partner the Association can always count on.

OECU has been serving teachers and other education employees for more than 50 years. From checking and savings accounts, auto loans and certificates of deposit, the credit union provides great services and rates to its members. It has branches in northwest Oklahoma City, Midwest City, Moore and Yukon.

The service doesn’t stop with individual account holders. OECU is a constant partner with OEA, the Student OEA and some of our local affiliates for a variety of events.

For several years, OECU has provided lunch for more than 200 college students and other volunteers at SOEA’s Outreach to Teach and Spring Convention. Members of the credit union staff pull a large charcoal cooker to the school receiving OTT’s makeover, cooking hamburgers and providing chips, drinks and cookies. For lunch during the Spring Convention and Fall Conference, OECU brings pizza and drinks for the attendees.

The credit union staff donates similar cookouts or donations to defray the cost of food for local association events. For instance, the Moore branch works closely with Moore ACT to help support the local’s back-to-school events for teachers, welcome-back packets for members, and some MACT meetings. OECU also provides MACT a preferred rate for its checking account.

One of the most popular door prizes at any OEA conference is a glass piggy bank full of candy and $20 in cash.

“The Oklahoma Educators’ Credit Union is a true friend to teachers and to education. We appreciate their service to our association and to education employees,” said Linda Hampton, OEA president.

Twice a year, OECU awards Teacher Grants to credit union members who are teachers or education personnel. The grant program accepts proposals for classroom start-up requests from first-year teachers; innovative programs, projects or activities; and teachers who show a need in the classroom.

Awards range from $100 to $500. The application deadline is 5 p.m. on the second Friday of July and November. Members can find an application and more information at oecu.com.

Floyd Atha has been a driving force behind the Oklahoma Educators’ Credit Union for 23 years. His leadership has helped define the credit union as more than just a financial institution for education employees, but also as a partner with education through OECU’s sponsorship of events and activities of the OEA and its local affiliates.

Atha, pictured above, will retire in August, leaving behind a legacy of community service. He was appointed to the Commission for Teacher Preparation by Republican Gov. Frank Keating and Democratic Gov. Brad Henry. Keating, Henry and Gov. David Walters all appointed Atha to the State Credit Union Board of Governors.

Through the years, Atha has been a member of the Oklahoma Credit Union League Board and past secretary and president of the Oklahoma Credit Union Executive Board.

Atha and his wife Nancy have been married for 43 years. He is the father of three sons, grandfather of seven “wonderful, above-average grandchildren,” and “proud father-in-law to three great daughters in-law.”
School districts looking for help preparing their faculties for the Tulsa Model Teacher/Leader Evaluation System will soon have a great resource. The Oklahoma Education Association has assembled 30 outstanding teachers to serve on the Association’s Tulsa TLE Cadre. Schools can schedule dates now with the cadre for training sessions after the first of August.

The Tulsa Model is one of the evaluation systems approved by the State Board of Education for this pilot year. The Board has reported that nearly 500 school districts have chosen the Tulsa TLE. The remaining districts are piloting model developed by Marzano or Charlotte Danielson.

The new evaluation systems bring higher expectations for teachers and require more time dedicated to the process by administrators. To be successful, faculty and administrators will have to be speaking the same language and working toward a common goal of creating better teaching and higher-level learning.

OEA’s Tulsa TLE Cadre will cover the statutory qualitative characteristics of the Tulsa model, including:
- Organizational and classroom management skills;
- Ability to provide effective instruction;
- Focus on continuous improvement and professional growth;
- Interpersonal skills;
- Leadership skills.

Trainings of one, two or three hours are available, covering the material as in-depth or as specific as time allows. Presenters are prepared to cover the Tulsa TLE rubric, discuss the required observation and evaluation process, rubric calculation, collection of articles for evidence, and provide an overview of the Tulsa TLE Handbook.

Some presentations will require two presenters, and the OEA will work with districts to use cadre members who live nearby to keep costs of the trainings to a minimum.

Visit okea.org/tulsatle for more detail on session topics, the costs of the trainings, and whom to contact to schedule training from the OEA Tulsa TLE Cadre.
Navigating Changes in Challenging Times is the theme for the OEA’s Summer Leadership Academy, July 25-26, at Northeastern State University’s Broken Arrow Campus.

The two-day event will feature leadership skill training for the various roles members play in their local associations, a variety of breakout sessions, and an evening of fun in a private bowling alley reserved for SLA attendees.

Registration for Summer Leadership is only $50 per person, and participants are asked to register online at oeasla2012-rss.eventbrite.com. Local leaders can register up to 10 members at a time on the site. Registration includes all training materials, bowling on July 25, and lunch on July 26.

July 3 is the deadline to register and to make reservations at the hotel. (Sorry, no refunds for cancellations made after the deadline.)

Lodging is the responsibility of the participants. Rooms are $81 a night plus tax at the host hotel, the Holiday Inn Express near Bass Pro Shops in Broken Arrow, 2251 N. Stone Wood Circle, Broken Arrow. Call 918/355-3200 to make reservations.

SLA kicks off at 1 p.m. July 25 in the 2nd floor Ballroom in the Administration Building at NSU Broken Arrow. The afternoon’s “Essential Skills for Local Leaders” will include sessions for:

• Presidents and Vice Presidents
• Treasurers
• Building Reps
• Negotiations Team Members
• Secretaries/Communicating with Members.

• Very Important Members, a session on how to lead without having a title.

At 7 p.m. on the 25th, SLA participants will be bowl at Andy B’s Family Entertainment Center.

During the second day of the conference (July 26), participants will rotate through three breakout sessions, choosing from these workshops:

• The Zen of Change – Learn how to be the master of your domain during stressful times of change.

• Highly Engaged Members: Toolkits for Action – A highly interactive session in which you’ll build a toolkit around one of OEA’s issues or programs, and then learn how to use it to engage and recruit members.

• Communicating the Changes... What’s your Tech Tool? – How should you communicate with your members? See what you can do with today’s technology, and how to survive when all you have is a pencil and a standard typewriter.

• Effective Lobbying in Times of Change – Pick up some tips on how to motivate your members to become politically active and the best ways to get your message across to legislators.

• Turn your Strengths into Leadership – Discover what you do best and learn how to maximize that skill for your leadership style.

• Evaluation System Organizing: TLE or Marzano Model – A new teacher/leader evaluation system is coming. Learn how your local can advocate for your members in this new environment, no matter which program your district chooses.

• All Hands on Deck: Building ESP membership through ESP/Teacher Association Partnerships – A special session to discuss how ESP and teacher locals can work together to build membership in both organizations. Develop leadership skills that unite all of your colleagues.

For more information, contact Maureen Peters, OEA teaching and learning assistant, at mpeters@okea.org, 800/522-8091 or 405/528-7785.

USAO donates books to Hillcrest Elementary

In the April/May 2012 issue of The Education Focus, we incorrectly attributed a book give-away to the wrong organization in a story about the Student OEA’s Outreach to Teach. It was the University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, through its Books for Tots program, that gave a book to every student at Hillcrest Elementary.
Remember to change

New laws require adjustments to current negotiated agreements

By Richard Wilkinson
OEA General Counsel

“Remember to Change” could be an apt description for a variety of education issues next school year. There will be changes in the law; a continuing decline in per-pupil expenditures, coupled with an increase in the number of pupils attending Oklahoma’s public schools next year; and a host of new rules and regulations recently adopted by the State Board of Education that impact teachers, students, and local school districts.

This article will outline those areas of “change” that will need to be addressed in any local collective bargaining agreement for the upcoming 2012-13 school year.

There are three major changes that will need to be addressed in upcoming negotiations for successor collective bargaining agreements:

• The first deals with the change in definitions for career and probationary teachers, the incorporation of the new Teacher and Leader Effectiveness Evaluation (TLE) system into the definitions, and the procedures required for the nonrenewal or dismissal of a career teacher.

• The second deals with the actual TLE system that has been agreed upon or adopted by a local school district and the procedures that will be utilized during the “pilot” year of the evaluation processes.

• The third deals with the traditional language in a Reduction in Force (RIF) Policy which typically lists seniority in a position or the school district as a criterion for selecting certified teachers for non-renewal after a decision to reduce force has been made.

Beginning July 1, 2012, definitions of a career and probationary teacher will change. A teacher must now complete four consecutive, complete school years in one school district to attain career status. However, if a teacher was employed in a school district during the 2011-12 school year, then they are subject to current requirements for achieving career status – completion of three consecutive, complete school years in one school district under a temporary or continuing teaching contract.

There are other definitional changes that incorporate the TLE ratings into the reasons for dismissal and non-reemployment of probationary teachers as well as the procedures for dismissing or nonrenewing a career teacher that will also need to be reflected in any collective bargaining agreement that contains those definitions.

Most of those agreements basically recite the statutes and this area should be thoroughly reviewed in any new collective bargaining agreement to ensure that all of the definitional changes have been made.

The (new) statute requires that any RIF policy should utilize the measurements and ratings of the new TLE system in determining the primary criterion for selecting certified teachers or administrators for reassignment or retention in any RIF plan implemented by a local school district.

Most of those agreements basically recite the statutes and this area should be thoroughly reviewed in any new collective bargaining agreement to ensure that all of the definitional changes have been made.

The new TLE system that has been agreed upon or adopted by a local school district should also be reflected in any successor negotiated agreement. Most bargaining locals either entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which modified an existing collective bargaining agreement, or negotiated actual language in a successor agreement that reflects the new TLE system that will be utilized for the upcoming 2012-13 school year. If that has not been done, then new language needs to be inserted into the agreement that accurately reflects the TLE system that has been selected and how that system will be utilized for the upcoming school year.

Additionally, the procedures for evaluating members of the bargaining unit and any standards of performance and conduct proposed for adoption beyond those established by the SDE should also be reflected in the new agreement. A large number of locals have already dealt with the new evaluation issues with their respective school districts; however the OEA Regional Advocacy UniServ Specialists can assist with any language and other items necessary to completely address the new TLE system for the upcoming school year.

Finally, the language contained in any RIF Policy should be examined to ensure that it complies with the

See “Contracts” on Page 11
Local associations were honored for outstanding communications and for creating strong organizations during Delegate Assembly. In addition, both high school and professional journalists were recognized for outstanding coverage of public education and the Oklahoma Education Association.

Following are lists of winners in OEA’s annual awards competitions. Visit the Photo Gallery at okea.org to see photos of all the winners.

**5 Star Locals**
Honoring local affiliates for meeting the requirements of the 5 Star Local Program, which outlines the activities and accomplishments in Communications, Advocacy, Teaching and Learning, Legislative and Political Organizing and Organizational Development. Each winning local earned a star in all five categories.

- Bartlesville Education Association
- Enid Education Association
- Professional Educators’ Association of Lawton
- Marlow Association of Classroom Teachers
- Mid-Del Association of Classroom Teachers
- Moore Association of Classroom Teachers
- Professional Educators of Norman
- McLoud Association of Classroom Teachers
- Putnam City Association of Classroom Teachers
- Sand Springs Education Association
- Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association

**Golden Apple Awards**
The Golden Apple Awards recognize local associations for outstanding communications efforts with their members and the general public.

**Newsletters**
“IN FOCUS,” Cindy Dunn, Becky Hatchett, Linda Bynum, Sand Springs EA
“PEAL in Action,” Cynthia Pharriss, Professional Educators’ Association of Lawton

**Special Projects**
“BEA Appreciation Cards,” Bartlesville EA
“ESP Recognition Video,” Union Support Personnel Association

**Marshall Gregory Awards**
High school student and professional journalists are honored in the Marshall Gregory Awards contest for excellence in covering public education, the education process and the events and issues of the OEA.

**Student Print Division**

**Special Publications**
Award of Excellence – “Budget Cuts 2011,” Katelyn McCarley, Bartlesville High School
Award of Merit – “The Pride,” Matthew Bendure, Editor, Chouteau High School

**Year-Round News**
Award of Excellence – *Webster Weekly*, Tulsa Webster High School

**Single Event, News**
Award of Excellence – “Cell Phones Now Part of Curriculum,” Cassie Hale, Tulsa Webster High School
Award of Merit – “Why Care?,” Amie Thomison and Nicole Biddinger, Bartlesville High School

*Vivian Brown (right), president of the Union Support Personnel Association, accepts a Golden Apple award for the USPA’s “Employee Recognition” video from OEA President Linda Hampton during April’s Delegate Assembly.*
new statute becoming effective July 1, 2012. That statute requires that any RIF policy should utilize the measurements and ratings of the new TLE system in determining the primary criterion for selecting certified teachers or administrators for reassignment or retention in any reduction in force plan implemented by a local school district.

Although the “law” and the “reality” in this instance have yet to align (i.e., “pilot year” TLE for 2012-13 with no approved or measurable testing data and possible limitation on punitive use of “pilot year” TLE data), this issue should nevertheless be addressed in any successor collective bargaining agreement. OEA Regional Advocacy UniServ Specialists can also help with model language to incorporate into a successor collective bargaining agreement that both meets the intent of the new statute and protects the rights of education employees in the event of a reduction in force.

These “changes” should be reviewed and considered during any negotiations for a successor collective bargaining agreement that covers a certified or administrator bargaining unit. Noncertified or support bargaining units are not impacted by the new statutory mandates discussed in this article and those agreements are less impacted by these changes.

Should you have additional questions regarding these changes, please contact your OEA Regional Advocacy Specialist for additional assistance.
Delegates approve new resolution

Continued from Page 7

New Business Item #7 – Moved by Caleb Allison, OKC-A; seconded by David Gould, TM-A/B. “I move that the OEA investigate the implementation of electronic publications and special Wi-Fi access for OEA “Green Delegates,” similar to the NEA RA, to reduce the printing cost and the overall cost of the Delegate Assembly.” Motion carried.

New Business Item #8 – Moved by Patti Ferguson-Palmer, TM-A/B; seconded by Lori Burris, OKC-D. “I move that the OEA Five Star Program be modified so that a local’s achievement of Five Star status be good for three years instead of one. Rationale: The process is labor-intensive and making it good for 3 years, we give the award and the process the attention and importance it deserves.” Motion carried.

New Business Item #9 – Moved by Caleb Allison, OKC-A; seconded by Angela Dudley, OKC-A. “I move that OEA inform its members through existing publications of the United Opt-Out movement, that allows for parents to opt their children out of state mandated testing, and the barriers that Oklahoma parents face to opt out of state testing.”

Moved by Lori Burris, OKC-D; seconded by Patti Ferguson-Palmer, TM-A/B. “I move to reconsider NBI #9.” Motion carried.

Moved by Patti Ferguson-Palmer, TM-A/B; seconded by Lori Burris, OKC-D. “I move to reconsider New Business Item #8.” Motion carried.

Amended the OEA Resolutions, Goal Area 1-10 Payroll Deduction – Add a new I-10 Payroll Deduction – “The OEA believes that members have the right to have payroll deduction of both membership dues and voluntary political contributions.” All subsequent resolution numbers in Goal I would be renumbered. Delegates approved the new resolution.

Final Credentials Committee report – 278 delegates, 16 guests.
Providing Quality Products and Services to the

Oklahoma Education Association

Helping to secure OEA Members’ Financial Security Since 1960
American Fidelity Assurance Company is committed to the education community. We are proud to offer the following products and services to Oklahoma Education Association members:

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- Tax-Deferred Annuities**  
- Section 125 Plans

American Fidelity Assurance Company
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