Education Focus

Oklahoma Education Association

Fall 2024

Member Resource Guide





As we enter this new school year, I know that you have been carefully writing each student's name on your welcome chart, you've made sure that everything is working meticulously on your school bus, and you've prepared the perfect list of questions to create a classroom community.

This is what I know about you, our amazing members of the Oklahoma Education Association. It's no secret what we see and hear each day and the challenges we face in our profession, but it is important for you to know that you are seen and valued for the profound impact you have on your students' lives. Thank you!

During my time in the classroom, I watched students grow leaps and bounds. In the simplest form, I watched heroes every day that took risks to try a new task and reach outside of themselves. You my friends, are my heroes! You have dedicated your time, energy, and passion to shaping the minds and hearts of our future generations.

I ask you to join me on a journey -- one that is steeped in our OEA mission. Our mission is clear and brings me energy as I look to the future. Every day, we get to advocate for education professionals. We get to help unite our members and the people of Oklahoma to fulfill the promise of public education-- to make sure that every student is successful in a diverse and interdependent world.

Come with me as we make a difference for our state and put the right people in the right places to make the right decision and making sure that we are telling our stories and holding up our profession to the highest standard and given the respect we deserve.

This is going to be an amazing school year because of you.

Katherine Bichop

The Education Focus

Volume 42, Issue 1

Katherine Bishop, President Cari Elledge, Vice President Carolyn Crowder, Executive Director Joe DuVall, Monica Royer, AJ Stegall, Communications Center Paige Goad, Center Assistant **The Education Focus** (ISSN 1542-1678) is published four times a year in the fall, winter, spring and summer by the Oklahoma Education Association, 323 E. Madison, Oklahoma City, OK 73105.

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Northeast and Tulsa Metro Teams 10820 E. 45th , Suite. 110, Tulsa, OK, 74146 800/331-5143 or 918/665-2282



The OEA Vision A Great Public School for Every Student

What OEA Values



EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

We believe public education is the gateway to opportunity. All students have the human and civil right to a quality public education that develops their potential, independence, and character.



PARTNERSHIP

We believe partnerships with parents, families, communities, and other stakeholders are essential to quality public education.



COLLECTIVE ACTION

We believe individuals are stregthened when they work together for the common good. As education professionals, we improve both our professional status and the quality of public education when we unite and advocate collectively.



PROFESSIONALISM

We believe that the expertise and judgment of education professionals are critical to student success. We maintain the highest professional standards, and we expect the status, compensation, and respect due all professionals.



A JUST SOCIETY

We believe public education is vital to building respect for the worth, dignity, and equality of every individual in our diverse society.



DEMOCRACY

We believe public education is the cornerstone of our republic. Public education provides individuals with the skills to be involved, informed, and engaged in our representative democracy.

You have to join OEA if you are an educator. It's so important to be a member of your professional organization so that you have the **community** and **resources** you need as an educator to give your students your best. -Betty Collins, Union Public Schools

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Support Professionals

School does not happen every day without education support professionals. The Oklahoma Education Association and local associations stand up for the unique and critical needs of Oklahoma Support Staff. Here are a few reasons why OEA is the choice for support staff.



WHY WE'RE THE BEST?



Working for Better Pay

OEA fought for and won a statewide support staff pay raise, and local affiliates bargained for better pay, too.



Earning Real Protection

OEA won paycheck protection for support during and after the pandemic. Now that protection is law.

What We Offer

Specialty Training

Support staff have unique jobs. You need training that fits your needs, and OEA has you covered.

Retirement Resources

OEA provides specialized resources to help support staff make the best choice about pension enrollment.

Fighting for Good Jobs

OEA and local associations have successfully stood up against privatization efforts across the state.





With AFQuickClaims, many benefits can now be processed faster than ever when filing online or through AFmobile[®].

Plus, enrolling in direct deposit means you may receive your benefits in as little as one day!

Insurance Benefits Eligible for Quick Processing



Accident Wellness and Screening Annual physical exam, preventive testing and more.



Cancer Diagnostic Testing Mammogram, PAP, colonoscopy and more.



Critical Illness

Health Screening Stress testing, blood glucose testing, echocardiogram and more.



Disability Pregnancy Claims Provides a quick and easy filing process for routine pregnancy claims.



Disability Physician Expense Pays a lump sum if you see a doctor due to a covered injury or sickness.



americanfidelity.com/afquickclaims



These products may contain limitations, exclusions and waiting periods. These products may be inappropriate for people who are eligible for Medicaid coverage. Cancer Insurance: Supporting documentation may be required for certain screenings. Critical Illness Insurance: Only offered on an after-tax basis. Physician Expense Benefit: Only available on certain plan types Wellness Benefit: Only available on the AO-03 Series Accident Insurance plan. Not available in all states. Screening Benefit: Only available on the AO22 Series Accident Insurance plan. Not available in all states.

Unparalleled











OKEA.ORG/LEGAL • OKEA.ORG/PLSP

Legal Services

OEA lawyers litigate over 100 (and counting) requests for legal assistance involving issues that have an impact for all education professionals, from protecting the due process rights of all education employees to ensuring that your rights are protected in the event of a reduction in force. **We have taken cases to the United States Supreme Court and won.**

Unlike other organizations, disciplinary defense provided by OEA has no dollar limit. We have expended hundreds of thousands of dollars in defense costs on numerous individual cases — with the member paying nothing more than annual dues.

We don't refer cases to inexperienced lawyers without backgrounds in education law. **OEA employs attorneys who have decades of experience** successfully representing education employees and dealing with education issues.

OEA members receive free legal advice and defense when facing disciplinary action and employment-related contractual disputes. **No cost to members. No deductible - ever.**

The OEA legal team is more than just a group of lawyers. Legal assists our leaders and advocacy staff to interpret the various legislative enactments, the numerous SDE administrative rule changes, as well as analyze and disseminate the various legal challenges and decisions resulting from litigation around those issues. **OEA attorneys are the legal experts on education employee rights in the state of Oklahoma.**

Uncompromising Protection

FREE Personal Legal Services

In addition to professional protection, OEA members have access to a wide range of **free legal services not offered in any other state**, such as:



In addition to free services, OEA members also have access to reduced-fee legal services for a host of other issues, including identity theft, victim protection orders, defamation, felonies, and other legal issues. These services also extend to OEA members' spouses and children. Conditions apply. Call 405.523.4340.

"

OEA takes **my voice and amplifies it**, they enabled me to do this. They also support me in so many ways whether it's in my classroom, in negotioations, at the capitol, OEA is amazing and I'm grateful for it every day. -Jenny Bobo, Stillwater Public Schools

Advocacy & Action



Collective Bargaining Assistance

More than 200 local OEA affiliates are recognized to bargain in Oklahoma and OEA Advocates are trained in a variety of bargaining methods and skilled in every facet of the bargaining process, from preparing to circulate a petition for recognition to impasse resolution.



Local Association Advocacy

Advocates provide assistance to local associations in grievance processing, contract maintenance, privatization issues, health and safety issues, and other local association issues.



Protecting You and Your Rights

OEA Advocates are trained to help you and your local association understand your professional rights and the protections available to you. Our goal is to assist you in participating in the decisions that affect your salaries, fringe benefits, and working conditions. Whether it is with you individually, through advocacy related trainings and workshops or in planning sessions with your local executive committee, we help protect you and your colleagues by offering assistance with a vast array of issues.



Member Advocacy

Assisting you with writing responses to evaluations, admonishments or plans for improvement, assistance with individual rights and employment problems, and representation with disciplinary issues.



Research

The Advocacy Center publishes Salary Schedule Comparisons and Extra Duty Pay Comparisons, and members have access to local collective bargaining agreements – all of which are available in the Members Only section of OKEA.ORG.



Democracy in Action



The OEA is a democratic organization, which means members decide how their organization runs at the local, state, and national levels. Members dictate the budget, legislative goals, and other business. There is no rich benefactor profiting at the end of the line. The OEA is an organization **of** educators, **by** educators, and **for** education.



Professional Learnin Offerings Below you will find the Teaching & Learning Center's presentations. Please contact us to discuss your int



BULLYING PREVENTION

psychological, social

and educational impact

Stop bullying by

investigating the

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

Create classroom momentum and engagement through specific routines, strategies, and classroom structures.



Beyond Trauma Informed **OE**ATrauma Cadre

TRUE COLORS

A personality survey that provides insight into learning and leadership styles and helps you make the most of both student and





THE ROLE OF RESILIENCY

For Oklahoma students impacted by poverty and trauma, resilience is a key characteristic for success in school. Learn classroom practices to help build resiliency.

EDUCATOR ETHICS: THE OKLAHOMA STANDARD

The Oklahoma Standards of Performance and Conduct for Teachers indicates educators are to be "guided in their conduct by their commitment to their students and their profession." Develop the professional judgment needed to perform your duties with honor and integrity and to protect yourself from poor evaluations, administrative actions, and professional liability. Sessions are available for both certified and support staff.



COMMUNICATING PROFESSIONALLY

How we engage with each of our audiences as educators can have significant benefits and repercussions! Learn about the ethical, professional, and practical considerations of both your spoken and written words as an educator.





s most-frequently requested erests and needs in more detail.

The OEA Trauma Cadre Initiative was created to provide strategies-rich, trauma-informed presentations to Oklahoma educators.

Working Together for Education

OEA is a founding member of the Oklahoma Education Coalition, which is dedicated to leading the effort to create, improve and support quality public education for all students, teachers and staff. OEA and its largest affiliate, the Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association, are the teacher voice at the table of the most comprehensive force for public education in Oklahoma. **okedcoalition.org**



CRISIS INTERVENTION

Learn how to respond rather than react when agitation is escalating! You can often proactively interrupt the conflict cycle with evidencebased strategies and utilize the de-escalation and recovery phases to shape future behavior and repair relationships.





Oklahoma Education Association



Cooperative Council of Oklahoma School Administration



Oklahoma State

School Boards

Association



Organization of Rural Oklahoma Schools



United Suburban Schools Association



Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association



Oklahoma City Public Schools



Oklahoma Association of Career and Technology Education



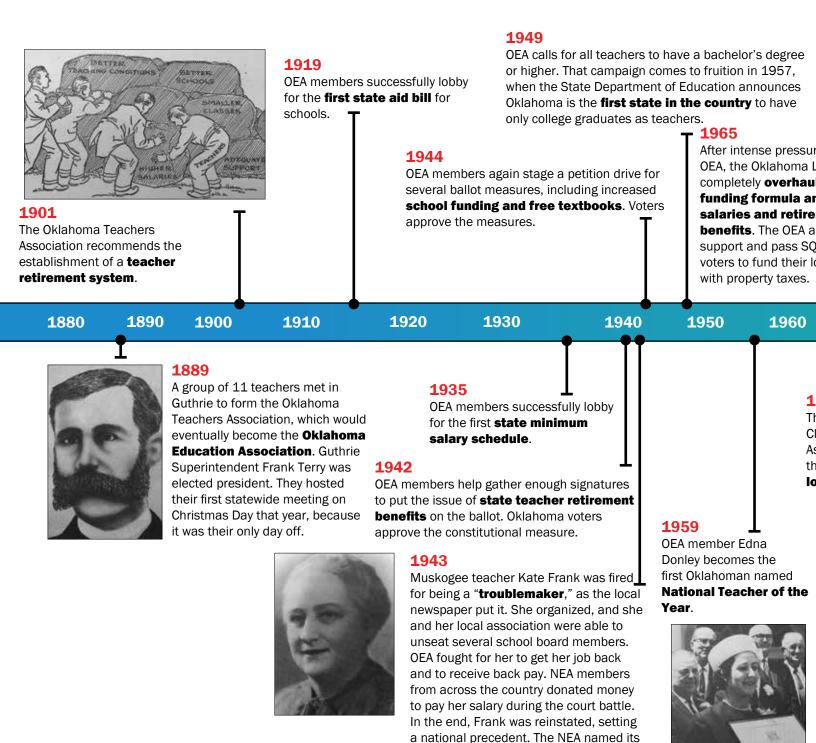
Tulsa Public Schools



Oklahoma Parents and Teachers Association

135 Years of Fighting fo

What started as a meeting of 11 teachers has turned into tens of thousands of public From state aid to retirement to salary to health insurance, **OEA has led the way** i



legal defense fund in her honor.

Molic Education

school advocates across Oklahoma. n public education for 135 years.

OEA secures due process for

education support professionals after fighting a court battle that led all the way to the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Oklahoma Legislature

bargain with local school

campaign by OEA.

1980

votes to allow teachers to

boards, after a months-long

1987

1970

1970

1990

OEA members stage a four-day statewide walkout that ended with the emergency enactment of HB 1017. More than 20,000 attend. The education reform bill **raised teacher pay, cut class sizes, funded professional development, and injected hundreds of millions into education funding**.

2010



2023 OEA member Rebeka Peterson becomes the second Oklahoman named National Teacher of the Year.

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965 **L** ne Midwest City assroom Teachers sociation becomes e **first bargaining** cal in the state.

OEA members lobby for the **Education Reform Act**.

1980

which establishes the first teacher mentor program in the country, boosts teacher certification standards, and mandates teacher-designed professional development statewide.

1988

OEA-backed

legislation

requires all

schools to offer group health insurance to employees.

OEA leads the **Put Education First** rally, bringing 30,000 educators

2000

1990

rally, bringing 30,000 educators to the Capitol and helping secure a \$3,000 raise for all teachers – the largest single-year raise in state history to that point.

2000

2018

OEA members stage a two-week statewide walkout that leads to tens of millions in additional classroom funding and pay raises for teachers and support. More than 50,000 attend on the largest day. It's **the most successful walkout of the national #RedForEd movement**.



2023

2020

OEA leads the charge on a **historic investment** into public education to include \$625 million in every year additional spending, a teacher pay raise, as well as 6 weeks of paid maternity leave





Oklahoma Aspiring Educators Association



Oklahoma Education Association



Oklahoma Retired Educators Association

The **Oklahoma Aspiring Educators Association** is a pre-professional organization of undergraduate and graduate students preparing for careers in education. OAEA is one of the largest student organizations in Oklahoma with local programs at over 25 university and college campuses. **okea.org/oaea**

The **Oklahoma Education Associaiton** is the largest education organization in the state, representing educators, administrators, and support professionals in nearly every district. OEA has been the force for positive change in public education for more than 135 years, and its members carry on that movement today. **okea.org**

The **Oklahoma Retired Educators Association** serves the retirees who dedicated their careers to public education. OREA provides a voice for retired education employees, secures and protects benefits, and enhances the quality of the life for members throughout the state. **orea.org**

Attention: First-Year Teachers!

Did you know you're eligible for a rebate in your first year as an OEA member? Get \$30 back for every year you were a student member with OEA and NEA. Fill out the form online at **okea.org/studentrebate or call 405.528.7785**



Fighting for public education

OEA's Legislative and Political Organizing (LPO) Center works on your behalf to promote and protect public education at the State Capitol. Working with legislators from both sides of the aisle, our staff lobbyists help educate elected officials on the pros and cons of legislation that affects schools, teachers, support professionals, students, and parents. Our top priorities are better pay and benefits, improved working conditions, and research-based reforms to benefit our students. LPOs assist local associations with at-home lobbying efforts, including get-togethers with legislators and candidate forums during election seasons. We also host members from across the state for education lobby days throughout the session.

Go to okea.org/civication to learn more.



FCPE Strengthens Education's Voice



Every decision made for public schools is a political decision, whether that decision is made by your locally elected school board, the state legislature, the Governor's office or even Congress. It's important to have a voice in the process. The Fund for Children and Public Education (FCPE) is the association's political action committee. Its funding comes only from voluntary contributions – never dues dollars – from our members. The Fund supports pro-public education candidates – regardless of party.

Your profession and your students are WORth it!



Local Wins



What good things are happening in your local association? OEA is more than just state advocacy and movements. We know that you work hard in your local communities and deserve recognition for it. Big or small, we want to hear about it!

Please share any local wins from the 2023-24 or 2024-25 school year with us including but not limited to:

- Bargaining/contract wins
- Participation in local events
- Community outreach
- Things you do on a local level for your members (services you provide, events you hold, etc.)
- Testimonials (ways in which your association has supported you)
- Whatever else you can think of to celebrate at the local level

This form is open to ALL members and OEA staff members. These responses will be featured in our member publications.





OEA Spotlight

We want to shine a light on YOU and the amazing things that you do in (or outside) of school! Please share your classroom stories, personal accomplishments, or anything else you are proud of. You could be featured in our newsletter, magazine, and/or social media. Feel free to nominate members you believe deserve a spotlight as well!

Some ideas for submissions:

- Your favorite classroom moment
- The story of why you decided to be an educator

- OEA member testimonials: moments you appreciated OEA or why you decided to ioin

- Awards you've received (education or personal)

- Articles you've written

This is open to ALL members and OEA staff members.

Examples of Submissions

A Local Win Submitted by Letitia Arney

"Our CEA purchased and created five giant goody bags and delivered them to each site for our first day back! They were filled with snacks varying from the healthy protein packed to the sweet junk foods we all adore. We spread them out on the table tops in the teacher's lounge for all teachers to enjoy. Then, we visited each site individually and presented our message in small groups, offering our testimony as to why we chose OEA to be our teacher support in the classroom. We grew by a third in membership this year! This was the biggest growth in our POE-dominated school district in a long, long time! Very exciting!"

A paragraph from Jasmine Quiñónez's spotlight submission:

"One of the best things about being in the classroom is getting to work one-on-one with the kids and watching them learn and make real life connections with the work. This is not something that comes second nature to most. Having a very rambunctious and fidgety younger brother, I couldn't help but grow up already trying to figure out how I would help him learn. And that guestion has never left me. Every lesson plan begins with "How can I get EVERY student engaged and help them learn?". Seeing this question answered in real time, watching the kids grow in their understanding, makes this work worthwhile."

Why Politics Matter

As we enter the final stretch of the presidential election season it would hardly be a surprise if you find yourself fed up with the constant advertisements and political attacks that you no doubt see on a daily, if not hourly, basis. It may sound appealing to try to tune it all out and focus on the things that make our jobs so fulfilling – our students, our practice, and our teams. But when you work in a profession as fundamental as ours happens to be, it is incumbent on us to continue to advocate for our families and communities at the ballot box.

> Every decision that is made about our schools and classrooms is made by an elected leader; the vast majority of those decisions are made by either your local school board or the state legislature. In Oklahoma, these two governing bodies don't even appear on the same ballot together — school board seats are decided between February and April, and legislative seats are decided between June and November. So, whether you're concerned with a lack of funding for your district or want to lobby for changes to your local curriculum, being engaged in these races is incredibly important.

The level of engagement is completely up to you. By simply educating yourself on the candidates and voting when you have the opportunity, you are working to ensure that pro-public education folks are being elected. If you want to get more involved, you can donate to a candidate, volunteer for a candidate, serve on an FCPE interviewing team, or maybe even run yourself.

However you choose to engage — know that your students, your school, and your community is better off because of your efforts.

Tyler Outlaw Legislative and Political Organizer

"Staying involved and informed in the Oklahoma legislative process is imperative for educators, and the Oklahoma Education Association provides resources for those working in public education to feel as if they have a voice and the ability to engage with their legislators.

My local, the Association of Duncan Educators, created a legislative team in 2018, to continue engagement with our state leaders. With the help of OEA, we're able to get briefings each time we head to the Capitol. When we attend morning Civication meetings, we not only get a list of education bills OEA is watching, but we also get explanations about the impact each of these bills can have on our occupations and the future of our students. These lists of bills give us talking points to interact with legislators and provide us information we can take back to our local.

Members of my local association also participate in the Civication at Home dinners, where state legislators are invited to dinner and provided time to talk with their constituents, who just happen to be educators. Events like this give us insight into how legislators view the legislative session and help to build relationships with our legislators.

My local members also stay in contact with OEA legislative lobbyists, who keep us informed and answer questions when we have them. Honestly, we couldn't do a lot of what we do without them."

Derrick Miller SW-C Zone Director

What does politics have to do with my classroom?

Who decides	School Board	Oklahoma Legislature	State Agencies	Federal Government
Your salary				
School budget				
Class sizes				
Length of the school year				
Health benefits				
Due process				
Retirement benefits				
Testing				
Hiring practices				
Teaching credentials				
Academic standards				
Textbooks				
Campus repairs and upgrades				
Employee rights				

Politics is already in your classroom.



Keeping You Informed

The OEA has a team of communications professionals who work to keep you informed about the latest happenings in your profession and at the State Capitol. Members enjoy free access.

Education Edge

A weekly email newsletter with resources, opportunities, and freebies.

Legislative Update

A weekly email with a recap of the latest in education and legislative news.

okea.org

News, information, and special resources only for OEA members.

Legislative Dashboards

An annual publication detailing lawmakers and their voting records on education.

Election Guide

A publication featuring candidate positions on education issues for every legislative race statewide in even-numbered years.

Fried Okra

A weekly podcast featuring guests from across the state, including OEA members, elected officials, and education experts.

Education Focus

A printed magazine that provides an inside look at OEA news, members, and local affiliates.

OEA Awards

Annual contests recognizing teachers, students, and advocates across Oklahoma.









Jour OEA Board of Directors

Katherine Bishop President Putnam City

Cari Elledge Vice President Norman

Zach Grimm NEA Director Moore

Kandee Almgren NW-A Alva

Courtney Baldwin Tulsa Metro-B Tulsa

Meagan Barth Tulsa Metro-C Glenpool

Brian Berg Tulsa Metro-D Union

Matthew Bless OAEA ECU

Jenny Bobo NW-B Stillwater

Amy Braun Admin-at-Large Moore Kamber Clark OKC Metro-A Moore

Tami Cooper ESP Mustang

RayTosha Craft NE-C Muskogee

Kelly Craig OKC Metro-D Mid-Del

Heather Davis NE-B Bartlesville

Siomara Davis OKC Metro-C Edmond

Russell Frederick SE-B Beggs

KathyHale ESP Putnam City

Adrienne Hall SW-B Norman

Catherine Hopper SE-C Poteau **Tiffany Johnson SE-A** Shawnee

Derrick Miller SW-C Duncan

Shawna Mott-Wright Tulsa Metro-A Tulsa

Amanda Pollan NE-A Grove

Paula Squires Retired-at-Large Retired

Amber Taylor OKC Metro-B Putnam City

Morgan Cotanny SW-A Lawton

Victoria Vargas Tulsa Metro-E Jenks

Mark Webb NW-C Mustang

Here for 904 -- ANYWHERE

The OEA is divided into six geographical regions with staff members across the state to serve you where you live and work.

Northwest 405.523.4356

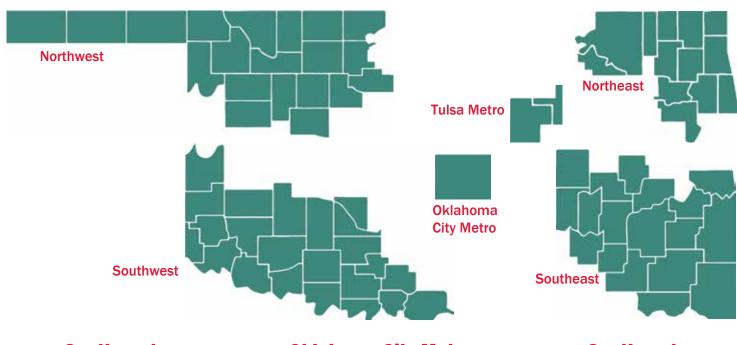
Team Assistant: Dusty Livingston Advocacy: Jacki McFarland Legislative: Tyler Outlaw Organizing: Patti Serio Teaching & Learning: Mary Dikes OAEA/Early Career: Joshua Frazier Communications: Joe DuVall

Tulsa Metro 918.665.2282

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Southwest 405.523.4356

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Oklahoma City Metro 405.523.4316

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Southeast 405.523.4316

Team Assistant: Lilia Ocampo Advocacy: Cal Ware Legislative: Ellen Pogemiller Organizing: Brian Johnson Teaching & Learning: Kim Littrell OAEA/Early Career: Joshua Frazier Communications: A.J. Stegall

ACE INSTITUTE NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

If you are a teacher looking for scholarship opportunities to complete your coursework, Northeastern State University through the Alternative Certification for Educators (ACE) Institute offers a range of options that can cover 100% of your tuition and fees. The scholarship programs are designed to meet your specific needs and help you achieve your academic goals. You can choose from alternative placement pathways, career development pathways, and master's degree scholarships. There are also specific scholarships available for OSAT Exam, PPAT Exam, and PPAT Mentor.

Career Development Pathways Early Childhood (pK-3) Scholarship that pays 100%

Elementary (1st-8th) 12 Hour
Scholarship that pays 100% for our
STEM Education Certificate

 Special Education (K-12) 12 Hour Scholarship that pays 100%

NO FASFA

OR INCOME

CHECK

REQUIRED!!

 12 Hour Scholarship that pays 100% for our Classroom Teaching and Learning Certificate

12 Hour Scholarship that pays 100% for our STEM Education Certificate

We have scholarships available to pay 100% of your OSAT and PPAT! Do you have 3-6 hrs that are required by the State Department of Oklahoma and don't know where to start? We've got you covered! We can help you enroll and pay 100% of those courses!!

STEPS:

- Apply to the graduate college. When you get in there, select non degreeseeking undeclared and payment as cash. The code is ACE Institute and you will not have to pay. Once your application is complete, it will be sent to Ana-Davis Landsaw, M.Ed. or Dr. Renee Cambiano as your advisor.
- 2. Sign and return your plan of study. This helps us place you in the correct classes that match your pathway!
- 3. Enroll in the courses we have given you. We will inform you on how to enroll and what courses you need.
- 4. Sign up for the scholarships! YAY! At this point in the process, we will send you the scholarship link.
- 5. Once we have determined you meet all the requirements, we will then send you your scholarship letter!!

Ana Davis-Landsaw 918-444-3777 aceinstitute@nsuok.edu





Make the most of your new **MEMBERSHIP!**

Find out how NEA Member Benefits can help you:

- \rightarrow Reduce student debt
- \rightarrow Save on travel and everyday items
- \rightarrow Get insurance that fits your schedule
- \rightarrow Sign up for free life insurance
- → Plan ahead for retirement

And so much more!



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Scan below to learn more

