

CANDIDATE QUESTIONNAIRE

(Applies to candidates running for IEA President, Vice President, NEA Director, IEA Representative on the NEA Resolutions Committee, At Large Member(s) on the IEA Board of Directors – this questionnaire is to appear on the reverse of the “Nomination Form for IEA Office” provided to potential candidates.)

1. Provide a brief overview of your experience in education

I began my teaching career in 1991. I started as a 7th and 8th grade Language Arts Teacher. In 1997 I moved to the elementary level where I taught 6th grade for the majority of 10 years. I moved back to the Middle School and taught 6th, 7th, and 8th grade math for 11 years. This past school year I took a position as a Middle School Instructional Coach.

2. What positions of leadership have you held (elected, appointed or voluntary) at the local, region, state or national level?

I have held many leadership positions at all levels of the association. At the local level I have been Secretary, Vice President, President, and Co-President. I am currently the Spokesperson for the negotiations team and Co-Chair of both the Teacher Evaluation Committee and the District Insurance Committee. I also serve as the only teacher on our districts Budget Advisory Committee which is made up of community members, a school board member and our Superintendent.

At the state level I currently represent Region 4 on the IEA Board of Directors. I am a member of the Budget Committee and the Personnel Committee. I am also the Region Four Representative on the GR Pace Committee. In the past, I have served two terms as Region 4 President.

At the national level, I was one of 3 Idaho teachers who represented Idaho as a facilitator on the NEA GPS website, now known as Ed Communities. I also served as the NEA Resolutions Chair for one year.

3. What do you believe are the three primary responsibilities of this office?

The NEA Director plays many roles, however I believe the three main roles are

- 1) Understanding NEA policy as it pertains to the state and the national levels. In order to be successful with this particular role, it is imperative that the NEA Director be actively involved in the NEA’s strategic plan and understand how it can be implemented at the state level.
- 2) Communication. The NEA Director is the liaison between the state association and the national association. Idaho members deserve to know what is going on at the

National Level. The NEA Director must be a clear communicator, one who not only shares what is taking place at the National Level, but one who will listen to the members across the state and share any concerns with the appropriate person.

- 3) Participate in Congressional Lobbying and actively seeking out ways to garner support for the legislative agenda of the NEA. This lobbying would include issues that are important to all NEA members such as Education Funding, Social Security, Safe Schools, and Child Health Care Programs to name a few. It will also be important to contact Idaho's Congressional Delegation both in DC and while they are at home in Idaho about issues that are specific to Idaho and all Idaho educators.
4. What do you see as the greatest challenge IEA members will face in the next five years? What ideas do you have to address that challenge?

I believe the greatest challenge facing IEA members is education funding. Idaho is in a crisis. It is not just about salary, it is about funding programs and curriculum. Towns and communities should not have to request a levy every year, and the districts who do not have a strong tax base should not be at a disadvantage from those districts that can pass the levies. As NEA Director, I will continue and expand on the efforts I have made to lobby legislators and push for appropriate funding. I will work with regions and organizing centers to recognize pro education candidates and I will work with members in educating them to use their voice to help strengthen our association. I will also work with our Director of Public Relations and the GR Committee to develop and implement trainings for regions and locals on how to develop relationships with legislators and how they personally can influence decisions made at the legislature.

5. What is your plan for increasing membership and member engagement?

Membership is the heart and soul of our association. When I won the state Membership Recruiter of the Year Award, it was because I successfully put a plan in place in our region and was diligent in following through with that plan. As the NEA Director, I will work at the National level with other NEA Board Members to garner the best membership recruitment and engagement ideas throughout the US and will share these ideas and plans with the IEA Board. I will work with the IEA Board to help implement Idaho membership plans and put ideas from the National level to work in Idaho. I will also work with the IEA Board on ways that we can increase our member engagement by supporting the efforts of the IGNITE Committee, Sparks retreats and other IPD opportunities. The more we can get our members engaged, the more they will help to recruit other members and remain as members in our association.

6. How do you intend to communicate with members in order to keep them informed and to find out their concerns?

Communication is the key to any successful organization. At the annual LUP meeting, I will ensure that all LUP's and Region Presidents know who I am and what my role is. I will develop a communication strategy that will be effective in their locals/regions. I plan

on creating a blog on Ed Communities where all members will have access to me and will get to know me. This platform would allow for issues and concerns to be shared and addressed. I would also like to create a consistent NEA Director newsletter that can be distributed to our members via email or social media.

7. Provide other information you would like members to know:

IEA members deserve the highest standard of representation. Communicating with our members is the key to this representation. Communicating with members in my local, my region, and with members across the state is something I do well. I have leadership skills that have allowed our local association to grow to over 50% of membership for the first time since the early 90's and I have developed a trusting relationship with our school board and district office team. I am the person the HR Director calls with concerns regarding our contract or board policy. I am trusted. Most importantly, I have the experience necessary to be an effective lobbyist. I have been doing it for over 20 years. I have the persistence and determination to make change. In 2013 I began working with my local representative to make a change in the law regarding funding of alternative schools. After two years of lobbying with legislators, Governor Otter signed the change into law. As your NEA Director I will use my communication skills to work with the IEA Executive Board and with members across the state to strengthen our collective voice. I will always advocate for our members.