Solving Indiana’s Teacher Shortage:

RESPECT
RECRUIT
RETAI

More on ISTA’s legislative priorities on page 7
Summer Conference Registration Opens March 1

Save the date and plan to register March 1 for ISTA’s Summer Conference held June 14–17. ISTA’s newly named Summer Conference will provide experienced and new educators with discussion techniques, bargaining skills, finance information, leadership training and much more. Watch for more information via email and on ISTA’s website at ista-in.org.

Call for Nominations

Have you witnessed an educator or community member truly making a positive impact on public education? Nominate them today for one of the many awards ISTA presents throughout the year and at the annual ISTA Representative Assembly on April 23.

Individual award descriptions, requirements and nomination deadlines can be found on the ISTA website at http://ista-in.org/awards. Nominate someone in your community who is making a difference for teachers, educational communities, and students.

@istamembers: Early Career Educators Conference

Jessica M. Campbell @jroberts • Nov 1
Had a great time at the ISTA conference and was able to rest. Now to put some methods into practice! #ISTAERLYEDUCATORS#lovetolearn

Kimberly J. Okeley @kjokeley • Nov 1
#ISTAEarlyEducators Have students tell you the objective everyday! What a wonderful and informative conference for leaders!

Todd Niswander @kjokeley • Nov 1
Great positive energy #ISTAEarlyeducators conference! Energized & looking forward to Good Teaching Conference. #weloveteaching@CREhseIN

Find us on Facebook: facebook.com/indianastateteachers.

See event photos: flickr.com/photos/indianastate/.
Indiana is confronting a crisis. A crisis which has the ability to impact employment, the state’s economic outlook, and our kids’ future. The looming crisis is the teacher shortage.

I remember a few years ago when one of my sons announced he planned to change his major—he wanted to teach. Part of me wanted to scream, “No, you don’t know what you’re getting into!” But, I knew he would be perfect in so many ways—perfect for the classroom of high school students he will one day have. He could excel at many jobs, but he wants to teach. In reality, I answered, “You’ll be great! Let’s get you signed up for student membership.”

While my son found his path to teaching, there are many others with a desire to teach but for numerous reasons choose to enter other professions. This summer the Indiana Department of Education confirmed that the state has seen a 30 percent drop in the number of those seeking licenses as first-time teachers. As a state, we have to ask ourselves, “Why?”

Why can’t we attract the best? Why can’t we retain the most valued educators?

It comes down to respect.

Indiana lawmakers have eroded the profession by relying on standardized testing, refusing to suspend evaluations based on the new ISTEP and quieting teacher voices in student learning conditions. The voice of the teacher has all but been eliminated in policy discussions at the Statehouse. The tide of disrespect has started to reverse with Superintendent Ritz’s advocacy for educators, but more needs to be done for Indiana to stem the loss of future educators.

The lack of respect for the teaching profession from our lawmakers has greatly impacted our ability to attract qualified, dedicated professionals. They see their salaries and benefits declining without opportunities for professional development and incentive programs. We charge our lawmakers to establish and fund programs to attract future educators in our high schools and provide loan forgiveness in exchange for service in public schools.

With a drop in first-time teachers, it is imperative we retain the seasoned professionals already in the classroom. As in any profession, professional development needs to keep pace with industry innovations. Indiana needs to reinstate financial support for educators pursuing professional development opportunities including National Board Certification. Teacher evaluations should not rest solely on testing and must reflect a transparent process.

These are the first steps this state can make to reverse the teacher shortage. We, as an association, need to come together to advance these priorities of respect, recruitment, and retainment by connecting with our state legislators. Watch for our calls to action via email or on social media. Your voice is important.

It is also our role, as ISTA members, to reach out to those, like my son and others, who feel the call of teaching. Welcome a new professional in your building. Act as a mentor. Foster an interest in the association’s work. This is a great profession, one that has felt the swing of political change, but if we take on the challenge and reaffirm our commitment, things will change. Things must change, for the sake of our kids, our schools, our future.
NEA Representative Assembly Delegate Nominees Listed

Following are nominees for 32 Category 1 state delegate positions and two Category 2 state delegate positions to the 2016 and 2017 meetings of the National Education Association Representative Assembly to be held in Washington, D.C., in 2016 and Boston, Massachusetts, in 2017.

THIS IS NOT A BALLOT. Each Active and Life Association member will find inserted in this copy of the Advocate an official ballot. Rules for voting accompany the official ballot. If you are an eligible voter and failed to receive a ballot, contact Brenda Reed at 800-382-4037 extension 324 or breed@ista-in.org.

Nominees are listed alphabetically for Category 1: NEA Active members who are not supervisors and NEA Life members who are not supervisors, retired or staff and Category 2 members: 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. (No Category 2 nominations were received.)

As a result of federal court actions forcing NEA compliance with the Landrum-Griffin Act, minority candidates are no longer listed or elected separately. There are a number of minority members who are candidates for delegateship, and they have the option of so indicating in their personal information that is listed with each nominee’s name.

Judith E. Abram-Odigbo
- ISTA Board of Directors
- IPACE Minority At-Large Member
- State & Local Minority Affairs Committee

Susan (Sue) K. Alexander
- Varied life/work experiences masters
- Daughter graduating Educ has my passion
- Seventeen years FWCS Elem teacher

Nicholas M. Atkins
- Local Vice President
- Political Action Committee Member
- Bargaining Team Member

Courtney Carol Ann Barber
- I’m MCEA secretary.
- I’m a member of PPS.
- I’m a MCEA bargaining member.

Philip J. Barber
- Governance Committee
- Member of REP Caucus
- Presenter at ISEA Conference

Betty Batliner
- Local President
- ISTA ESP Council Chair
- NEA Delegate 4 years

Margaret Joann Belch
- FWEA Rep at NEA Conference—Orlando
- Union Rep at my elementary school.

Marcie Billingsley-Herring
- NEA Resolutions Committee (currently serving)
- Local VP, District 11 Issues-Concerns

Diana Bucher
- ISTA Board of Directors
- Former local president, current membership chair
- IN Political Action Committee for Education

Tammy S. Byrer
- Board Management Personnel and ISTA Board
- Local President NDCTA
- NEA RA for 15 years

Julie Ann Callahan
- ISTA—Early Career Educator Conference 2015
- FWEA—Middle School Representative Alternate
- Active FWEA Member

Janet K. Chandler
- Hamilton Southeastern Education Association President
- ISTA Legal Defense Panel
- Unit 12 Council Chair

John D. Comer
- Local President
- ISTA Board of Director—District 10
- Member of the Board Executive Committee

Donna L. Craig
- Secretary of local association
- Treasurer of DISCO
- Governance member

Tara H. Deppert

Connie J. Dietrich
- PPS Committee Member—12 years
- District 23 Council Secretary
- Treasurer—West Clark TA

Robin Lee Endris
- Actively participated in 11 NEA RA’s
- 15 years in Local Union leadership
- 7 years on the ISTA Board

Megan N. Ewing
- Former NEA RA State Delegate
- Former NEA RA Local Delegate
- Current Warren Education Association building representative

John Joseph Feeney
- Building Representative
- Local Delegate NEA RA 2015
- Building Discussion team

Michelle Marie Feeney
- Building representative for four years
- Attended 2015 NEA Assembly in Orlando
- Attended 2014 NEA Assembly in Denver

Twyla Faye Flint
- Local President of SKCTA
- District Council Representative
- Governance Committee Member
Keith D. Gambill  
• ISTA Vice President 2013–present  
• NEA Resolutions 2011–2013  
• Evansville Teachers Association, President 2008–2013

DuShaun Level Goings  
• MAC Committee  
• Building Representative

Dan Haskell  
• Local President  
• ISTA Board Member  
• Past NEA State Delegate

Charles J. Held  
• Build Rep, Member Governance Committee,  
• Prior Delegate to NEA RA, Multiple Years  
• Delegate to ISTA RA, & SEIC

Kristi D. Held  
• President WCTA, Delegate District Council  
• Delegate NEA RA multiple years  
• Member of local PAC

Julia A. Hyndman  
• ISTA Board of Directors  
• Fort Wayne EA President  
• FWEA—Negotiation’s Spokesperson

Deborah Joy Jackson  
• Twenty years HSEA Association Representative  
• Attended State and national representative Assemblies  
• HSEA V.P. of membership and elections

Hilda Melissa Kendrick  
• National Education Board of Director—Indiana  
• Indiana State Teachers Board of Director  
• Minority Education Committee Member

Kimberly Ann Kennedy  
• Association Representative for my building  
• Attended 2014 Representative Assembly (Denver)  
• Attended 2015 Representative Assembly (Orlando)

Mary J. Kreienbrink  
• Building representative

Connie S. LaRocco  
• NEA RA delegate—6 times  
• ISTA RA local delegate—3 times  
• Past HSEAAR and Discussion Rep

Debra Leigh Marcum  
• ISTA Board of Directors—District 12  
• Local President  
• District Council Secretary

Callie A. Marksberry  
• ISTA Treasurer  
• Past chair NEA PSP Committee  
• Local corresponding Secretary

Richard (Rick) A. Marshall  
• Unit 17 District Council Chair  
• North Knox CTA Co-President  
• IPACE Committee Member

Evan S. McKalip  
• SOEA Executive Committee Member  
• Two time NEA and ISTA RA  
• OVHS Building Representative

Teresa F. Meredith  
• ISTA President 2013 to present  
• ISTA Board of Directors 2000–2006  
• ISTA Vice President 2007–2013

Donita Kaye Mize  
• Delegate to NEA-RA multiple times.  
• Past ISTA Board of Directors  
• ESP Sub teacher and Bus assistant

Jack Ray Mize  
• Vice Chair of I-PACE  
• Local PAC State Lobbier  
• NEA RA Delegate 20+ yrs.

Pamela Moreland-Haviland  
• 9 years experience as Delegate  
• 13 years Local President  
• ISTA Board of Directors, ESP

Marlena Mulligan  
• FWEA Vice President  
• Negotiations/Joint Discussion Committee  
• ISTA and NEA Representative Assemblies

Chike V. Odighoh  
• NEA  
• EAEA  
• ISTA

Mary H. Puntney  
• Chair IPACE 2002–2015  
• Co-President WRVEA 2014–2016  
• Governance Representative Unit 18

Robert Joe Rice  
• State Delegate 2014–2016  
• Association Building rep  
• Participate in ISTA Lobbying activities

Heidi M. Slavkin  
• Local Association Vice President (6 years)  
• NEA-RA Delegate/Elections Committee  
• Emerging Leaders I/II

Jennifer Smith-Margraf  
• ISTA Board Member  
• BMP Committee  
• IPACE

Deana L. Stickels  
• ISTA Board of Directors 2014–Present  
• NEA RA Local/State Delegate  
• SOEA President 2014–Present

Dominic W. Thompson  
• 4x NEA RA State/Local Delegate  
• 9x ISTA RA Delegate  
• Local Association Vice President, Bargaining, Discussion

Charles Mike Turner  
• Local Vice-President 5 years  
• State Delegate 2 years  
• Emerging Leader

Donnie Watkins  
• Local President  
• ISTA Board of Directors  
• NEA Vice Chair-Small School Caucus

Joni R. Weeks  
• ISTA Board of Directors  
• Past local delegate  
• Past local secretary

RaeAnn Wintin  
• Current Building Rep  
• Attended NEA RA’s 2011, 2014, 2015  
• Former leader of Student Program ISEA

Nancy J. Wright  
• State delegate to NEA RA  
• NEA Board of Directors (2008–2014)  
• ISTA Board of Directors (2004–2014)

Lori A. Young  
• NEA RA 4 years  
• Professional Practices and Standards Secretary/Member  
• Local Board Member, Building Representative
One Semester Under Her Belt

The Advocate revisits the classroom of Bianka Teeters to get her insights as a first-year teacher.

Q: What have been your most significant challenges in the classroom? Successes?

A: My most significant challenges in the classroom I would say have been figuring out ways to have a management system for different students and being in a classroom where each student has a Macbook Air. I have been working to create management systems that work for my students. I want my classroom environment to work for all of my students. This is also the first time I have taught in a 1:1 setting, but I truly love it. By all of my students having devices, it allows for me to really differentiate and allow students to have their own personalized learning throughout the day. I would say my successes are figuring out an organizational system, collaborating with other teachers, and getting to know my students. Forming relationships with my students was one of my main goals starting the year. If students are in an environment where they don’t feel a connection or feel enjoyment to be there, they do not learn.

Q: How has your role in ISTA supported you in your first semester?

A: My membership in ISTA has provided me with more opportunities to discuss various topics in my district. I was also able to see the behind the scenes of negotiations. ISTA is truly invaluable.

Q: What recommendations would you make to ISEA members or final semester education students preparing to enter the teaching profession?

A: For ISEA members, my advice would be to get involved. By this I mean get into classrooms as often as possible, start buying supplies you know can be used in any classroom, and attend any and all professional development opportunities. I would also say start talking and networking with current ISTA members and veteran teachers. These teachers have a vast amount of experience and knowledge and can help new teachers. Your final semester is usually student teaching and I would say take advantage of any opportunities and dive into all of student teaching.

Q: You attended the ISTA Early Educator Conference. How does professional development programming like this enhance your classroom success? What are the top three tips or lessons from the conference that resonated with you?

A: By attending the ISTA Early Educator Conference I was able to talk with and share my experiences with others. I was also able to see a lot of my challenges and successes as a first year teacher are common. This enhances my classroom success because I am able to see if other new teachers have any new tips or strategies that are working for them that maybe I could put into place in my classroom.

Lessons from first semester

1. Be flexible.
2. Be organized.
3. Put my all into everything.
Solutions to Indiana’s Teacher Shortage
2016 ISTA Legislative Priorities

RESPECT
Teachers across the state routinely call for lawmakers and others in public policymaking to respect the work they are doing. A big part of respecting their work requires trusting them as professionals.

End over-testing students and misusing scores
• Provide greater class time balance between instruction and testing.
• Conduct a statewide survey on time spent on state standardized and local testing times, including test prep.
• Find an alternative to ISTEP.

Attract the best and brightest
• Create and fund a program to provide incentives and supports for school districts that provides additional programs in high schools, beyond the cadet teaching program, to draw future educators to the profession.

Incentivize and encourage new teachers to remain in the profession
• Create a state-funded loan-forgiveness program that exchanges student loan forgiveness for service, including current, qualifying teachers who carry student loan debt.

RECRUIT
School districts struggle to recruit teachers due to limited program resources, diminished compensation and benefits, narrowed candidate pools, and far-reaching geography.

Incentivize and support professional development and mentoring
• Restore funding for professional development.
• Re-create a funded mentor program.
• Encourage and incentivize National Board Certification.

Improve teacher evaluations
• Incorporate teacher input in development of local plans.

Balance Out-of-pocket Expenses
• Increase the cap schools can pay for health care and restrict cap dollars to only teacher health care.
• Avoid counting employees’ HSAs toward the cap.

Honor and strengthen pensions
• Grant a true Cost-of-Living Adjustment for retirees.

Address class size
• Conduct a statewide audit of class sizes to inform 2017 funding.

RETAIN
Ensuring there is a ready supply of quality teachers is essential. Keeping experienced teachers in the classroom is paramount.

Read ISTA’s full legislative agenda at ista-in.org/legislativeagenda.
Candidate Issue Statements for ISTA and NEA Positions

The following statements were prepared by the candidate for the office they seek. The statement has been printed in its entirety, unabridged, as it was received, but limited to 200 words or fewer. ISTA Rules Governing Elections, (III. A., 2., b. and c.) prohibit the use of Association staff and equipment on behalf of any candidate for Association office. The election for the office listed below will be held at the 2016 ISTA Representative Assembly on April 23 in Indianapolis.

Candidate for NEA Board of Directors, Jennifer Smith-Margraf

As your NEA Director, you can count on me to work on behalf of all ISTA members at the national level to ensure that we continue to be the strongest force for public education in Indiana and the nation at large.

We must continue to fight to end the era of toxic testing and put in place systems that value the education of the whole child. We must end the constant disrespect of our professions and engage society at large in valuing what a strong public education means for each child. We must change the narrative from a focus on test scores to a focus on the positive relationships that we create each day with our students and their families.

I will be your voice on these and the other important issues that we face every day, just as I have done as a local president, district council chair, Issues & Concerns committee member, IPACE member, ISTA Board member, and NEA Resolutions committee member. We must continue to speak loudly, clearly, and unequivocally on behalf of our students, our colleagues, and public education.

I ask for your confidence and your vote for the NEA Board of Directors.

Candidate for President, Teresa Meredith

“I know not how society can be aided more than by an organized body of efficient educators.”
—William Daily, ISTA President

These words, spoken on Christmas day in 1854 at the birth of ISTA, still ring true today. It has been a privilege to serve as ISTA president the past three years. My commitment to you in 2013 was to bring greater awareness to the professional needs of our members. Today, ISTA is focusing on those needs through the work of the Professional Resource Center. I promised to bring a stronger recognition for the work of education support professionals, and that is reflected through social media, through the annual ESP conference, and more. Progress is being made as we work to improve all our members’ professional and personal lives, from preservice and active classroom teachers to education support professionals and ISTA-R members. When we stand together, we are a force to be reckoned with.

If reelected president on April 23, I will continue to lead on issues that matter most to you, the members. It STILL Matters to Meredith. Together we will preserve and protect public education for our students, our colleagues, and the future of Indiana.

Candidate for Vice President, Keith Gambill

Indiana is celebrating 200 years of statehood and education reform movements seek to turn back the clock on public education. Our founders knew the importance of a quality public education for every student and we must remain stalwart to this cause. Our strength is our collective voice. As the experts in our fields, we cannot allow fade distractions to divert our attention from our mission.

I’ve been honored to serve as your vice president for the past three years. I believe we are on the right course to help turn the tide of harmful education experimentation. As an organization, we are stronger by investing our talents and resources into programs that strengthen our profession. As advocates, we are stronger by clearly articulating the needs our members and students. And as leaders, we have the knowledge and ability to make public education in Indiana the shining star we know it can be.

I am seeking reelection because I believe in the work we are doing to improve the lives of our members and change the lives of our students. I believe we are on the right course for a bright future and I’m asking for your support. Our future. Together.