

ADVOCATE

AN INDIANA STATE TEACHERS ASSOCIATION PUBLICATION

Guiding Futures: Teaching Through Leadership

IDENTIFY EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESSFULLY
INCREASING MEMBERSHIP IN YOUR LOCAL.

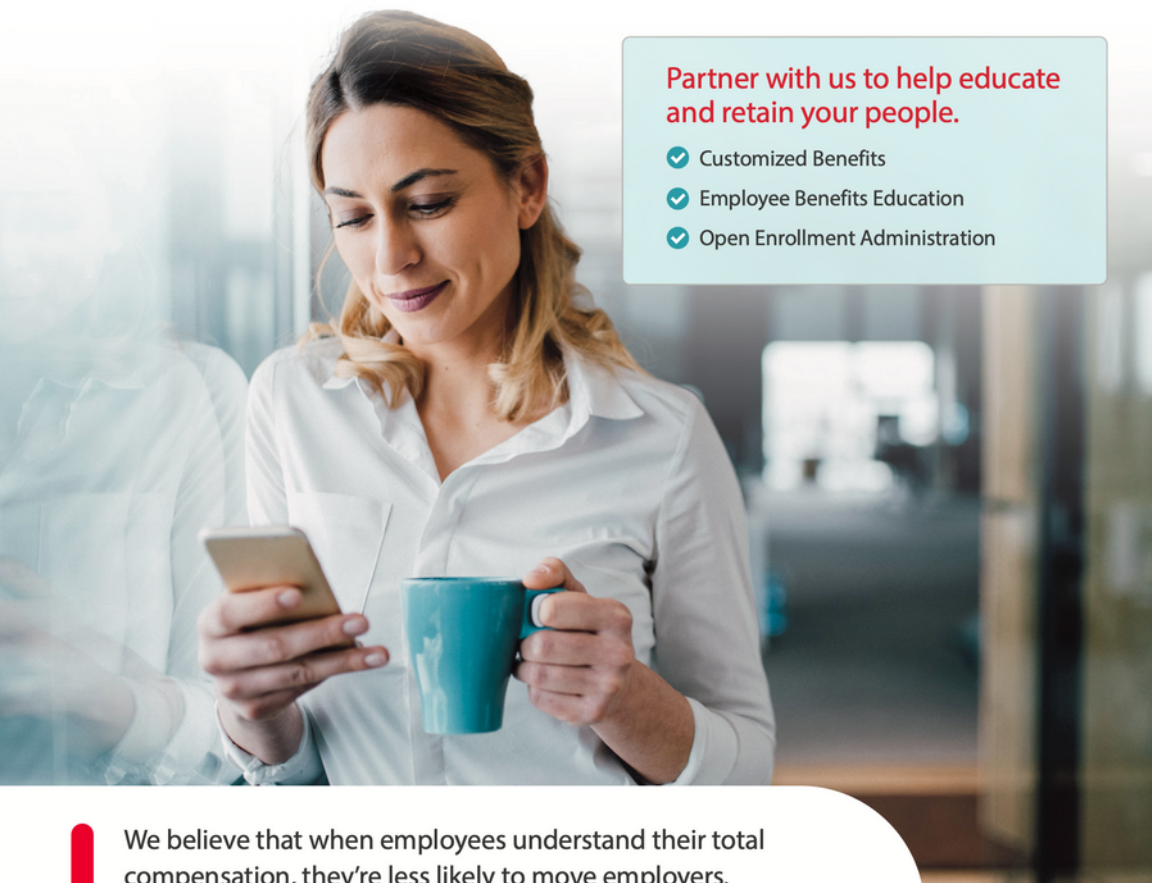
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LEARN ABOUT WHAT THE NEW ATTENDANCE LAW
MEANS FOR SCHOOLS. | PAGE 06

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a different opinion

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We'd love to hear from you!

Are you passionate about defending public education, advocating for equitable schools, building strong locals, protecting our future, culturally responsive teaching or new education trends? Email us at communications@ista-in.org to contribute to *The Advocate*.

The *Advocate* is the official quarterly publication of the Indiana State Teachers Association, the state level of the United Education Profession. The content of the Association's publications will be consistent with its mission, strategic objectives and policies.

Fall 2025:
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PURPOSE, MISSION AND GOALS

PURPOSE

To advocate for and advance the interests of Indiana's students, educators and public schools.

MISSION

The Indiana State Teachers Association is a professional association organized to sustain quality public education, improve students' educational opportunities and advance the professional status of educators.

GOALS

- Unify our voices — we are stronger together.
- Provide economic security and professional working conditions for educators.
- Create a premier public education system that serves all kids regardless of ZIP code, culture or ability.
- Fight for racial and social justice.



Jennifer Smith-Margraf, ISTA President

As the weather begins to cool and the leaves change colors outside, it's a sure sign that we are well into the college football and volleyball seasons. It's also a clear sign that we are well into the bargaining season and that the legislative session will be here before we know it.

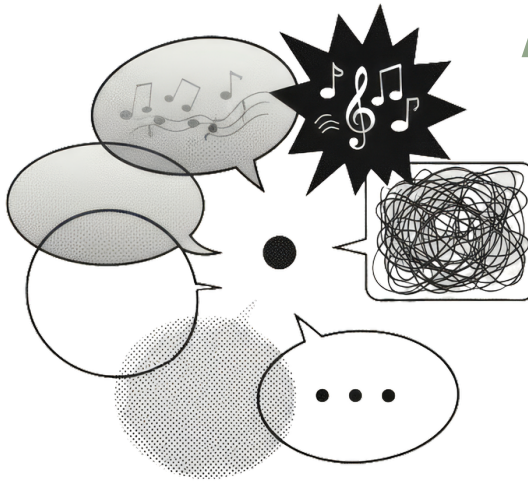
As your ISTA officers travel the state, meeting with members, we hear your desire for competitive pay and benefits and better working conditions. We know that your bargaining teams are hard at work negotiating on behalf of our members. We also know that their work is dependent on decisions made during the legislative session by the General Assembly. That's why another fall activity that every local should be participating in is arranging meetings back home with members and local legislators. Legislators need to hear directly from educators about how their policy decisions are affecting their local students, educators and schools. ISTA staff are available to help your local organize meetings or school visits and ensure that your voice is heard by those making decisions that directly impact you and your students.

The ISTA Good Teaching Conference is just around the corner. This is always such a terrific opportunity to network with fellow educators and add tools to your professional toolbox. I hope to see you there learning, growing and renewing with your ISTA friends from across the state. I also hope that you make plans to rest and reinvigorate over your fall break by making time to enjoy something that is just for you.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer Smith-Margraf". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Jennifer Smith-Margraf
ISTA President



IT'S YOUR TURN TO TEACH



ELIZABETH FELTS

Elizabeth Felts is a member of North Lawrence EA. She is an association representative and serves on the Professional Practices and Standards Committee.

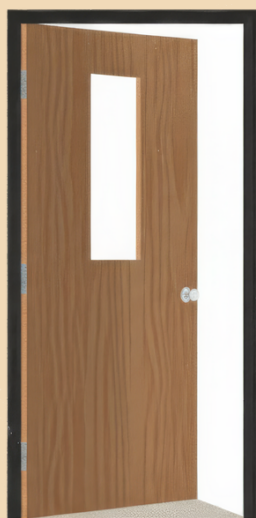
One of my **favorite lessons to teach** is one that **I do not teach at all**; it is one that could apply to any subject. This method works best for **complex topics** that can be divided into smaller parts or **broad-range topics**. I assign each part to a small student group and instruct them to be “in charge of teaching.” Each group must present their topic using text, visuals, oral explanations and a hands-on activity.

The key is providing a **well-defined rubric and detailed parameters** to maintain focus and accountability. Students also have the chance to evaluate each other’s participation and presentation. (I hate to admit it, but AI is a great resource for creating detailed rubrics.)

While I give support, materials and preview presentations to ensure accuracy, students have freedom in how they teach their peers. If this method sounds familiar, it’s because it’s very similar to the **“jigsaw teaching” strategy**, in which each student becomes an “expert” on one portion of the material before teaching it to others; however, I take it a step further by **infusing humor, creative freedom and student choice** (to an extent) into the process.

I have had students utilize songs, dances, crafts and food as tools for teaching their peers. Whether they are teaching geometry concepts, body systems, music genres or literary devices, the possibilities for creative freedom are endless. With the chance to take ownership and showcase their personalities, students not only master the content at a deeper level but also **develop confidence, leadership and collaboration skills** that extend far beyond the classroom.

Keeping Track:



WHAT THE NEW ATTENDANCE LAW MEANS FOR SCHOOLS

This summer, **a new law aimed at reducing chronic absenteeism** in schools, SEA 482, took effect. While it does not change local control over what counts as an excused or unexcused absence, it does **require earlier action from schools when students miss class time**.

SEA 482 requires schools to **notify families and hold an attendance conference** when a student has **five total absences**, excused or unexcused, within a 10-week period. The goal is to identify barriers and offer support early, before students fall too far behind. This step is mandatory and applies to all public-school students.

The law also formally defines **chronic absenteeism as missing 10% (around 18 days) or more of the school year, for any reason**. This definition is used in state reporting and accountability metrics. It underscores the broader impact of missed instructional time, even when absences are excused.

Importantly, SEA 482 does not penalize families for excused absences, and **habitual truancy remains defined as 10 or more unexcused absences**. Only those cases may be referred to local prosecutors, and only after schools attempt interventions. Students cannot be suspended or expelled solely due to absenteeism until at least July 2026.

ISTA supports efforts to improve attendance, but urges that implementation remain **grounded in fairness, transparency and communication**. This includes ensuring that absenteeism interventions do not unintentionally funnel students, particularly students of color, into **punitive systems that contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline**. For questions about how the law is being applied locally, members should reach out to their ISTA UniServ Director.



LEARN MORE

Want to dig deeper? For more information on chronic absenteeism, visit the Indiana Department of Education site for guidance.



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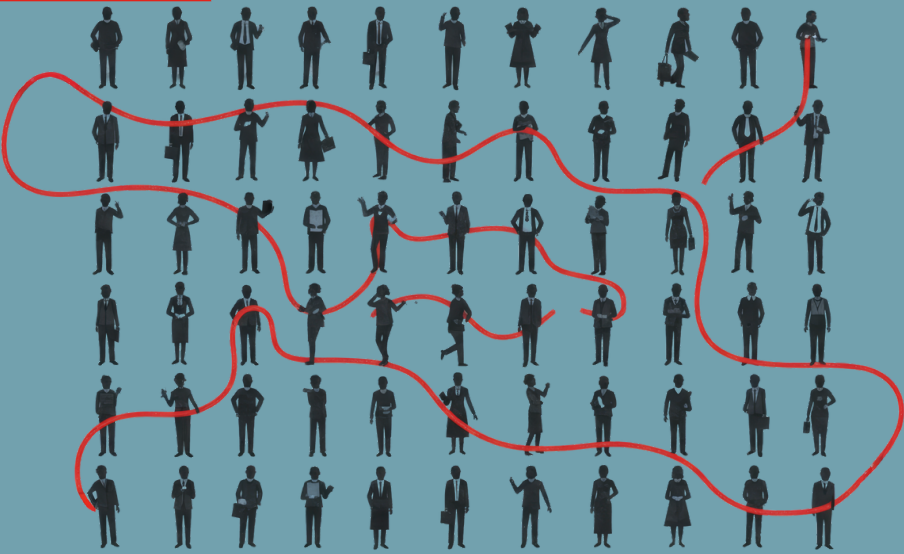
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EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

for Increasing Membership in Our Union



**HOLLY
PENNIX**

Holly Pennix is a member of Elkhart TA. She is a seventh-grade science teacher at West Side Middle School, serving the needs of students in seventh-grade science, honors and high ability. Pennix serves as an association representative and a YRO member organizer.

.....

Elkhart Community Schools is a large school district that comprises approximately **700 teachers** that serve the needs of **11,320 students**. The district is made up of 13 elementary schools, three middle schools and one high school with two campuses. **The Elkhart Teachers Association (ETA)** has been the direct link between the teachers, school board and the Superintendent. Public education is facing many challenges due to **underfunding and growing workload demands**. To ensure our union's unified voice of educators continues to be heard, we must **prioritize member recruitment**. The ETA with the help of the ISTA and NEA has seen significant increases in its membership over the last three years. To increase membership locals should utilize best practices and strategies that may work for their locals.

The ETA has paid **year-round organizers** who are trained to conduct one-on-ones with potential and current members, assist in the development and implementation of membership plans and provide engagement opportunities at the local level for potential and current members. These organizers are selected through the **year-round organizing program** that provides locals with support, training, resources and membership campaign planning. This **grant program that is funded through both ISTA and the NEA** has been the most significant reason why membership in Elkhart has increased over the last three years.

Here are effective strategies that have worked on increasing our membership:



Relationship Building:

Through the YRO program, year-round organizers in conjunction with building representatives, current members and leaders in our union can build connections and relationships with potential members. By listening to potential members, acknowledging their needs and concerns, and explaining how our union is addressing the issues they care about, you show them that their concerns are important and their voice matters.



Attending New Teacher Orientation:

An effective strategy has been having the building representatives, year-round organizers and union leadership attend the new teacher orientation. At this event, local union presidents should share the wins of the union and the importance of new hires joining. The building representatives, year-round organizers and leadership should conduct one-on-one conversations with the new hires and give them the opportunity to sign up for membership. Follow-up is essential for new hires who do not join during the orientation.



Highlighting the Wins:

It is important to get current members to highlight union wins to potential members. Members want to see the impact that the union is making. Some key successes to highlight are bargaining wins, class size, discipline, evaluations and issues that are most relevant to the individual potential member. I always tell any potential member who becomes a member that it is now their job to get someone else to join our union. We need to brag about our union so others can recognize the importance of our union in fighting for our students and teachers.



Encouraging Engagement:

To ensure our union continues to grow in both numbers and influence, we need more engaged members. We must encourage active members to take part, take ownership and feel invested in our union's success. Simple ways to get involved include wearing red on Wednesdays, attending a board meeting or creating a poster for an event. There are countless ways to foster shared leadership.

Our union belongs to all of us and serves as the collective voice for everyone—whether potential or active members. Strengthening our union is everyone's responsibility, achieved by building meaningful relationships and staying actively engaged.



EXPLORE FURTHER

Keep the conversation going – find out more about the year-round organizing program.

Why Write an NBI?



Wafa Safi-Hassan

Wafa Safi-Hassan is a member of Hamilton Southeastern EA. She is a NEA Board Director and also serves as a member of the ISTA district council, Human and Civil Rights Committee and Racial Affairs Committee.

Ever sit at an association event and wonder why it feels like **something is missing or could be better**? There are times where you learn that you were correct in that the association does not have something in place to address those needs. **That's where NBIs (New Business Items) come in.**

The NBI is **a formal proposal submitted by a member or delegate** to initiate action on a new or emerging issue. Far more than a procedural formality, the NBI is **a vital tool for democratic change**. It allows a diverse membership to directly influence the association's agenda and ensures the leadership remains responsive to the evolving needs and concerns of its members. Using NBIs ensures that the association's mission remains aligned with its members' needs, allowing it to stay **resilient, innovative and deeply relevant**.

When I first attended NEA's Representative Assembly (RA), I remember being **in awe of the topics** that were brought to the RA floor and the spirited debates that followed. As I began to learn more about unionism and how it works, I questioned why certain systems were not in place. I started to think of solutions to the problems/challenges and **gathered the courage to write three NBIs. All three passed on the ISTA RA floor**. It was an incredible experience because I felt like I was able to be **a part of the solution** and bring about positive changes.

I remember talking to some members who said to me that they had assumed that topics I brought to the floor were already incorporated into ISTA. And it dawned on me that **this is why we are delegates**. We study what is in the association and how we can **make it better**. The following year, the Human and Civil Rights Committee brought forward several NBIs and issues that they also requested go to the Board to decide on how best to solve the issues. **Not everything has to be an NBI, but it helps bring attention to the issues and bring about change.**



LEARN MORE

Interested in learning more about writing NBIs? Visit the NEA website and review helpful tips. Also, feel free to contact your UniServ Director or ISTA Board Representative for assistance.



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Our *insurance and retirement solutions* help educators protect what they have today and prepare for a successful tomorrow.

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LOOK AHEAD:

Inside the Good Teaching Conference



The Good Teaching Conference returns Nov. 7–8, bringing together educators from across Indiana for two days of **inspiration, collaboration and practical strategies** to take back to the classroom.

This conference **by teachers, for teachers** is designed for every educator—whether you're just starting your career or are a seasoned pro in PK–12 or higher education. The sessions are led by fellow educators, offering **real-world solutions and fresh perspectives** you can apply immediately.

The 2025 theme, **Grounded in Teaching. United in Purpose.**, celebrates the heart of the profession and the power of educators coming together to support student success.

What to Expect

Real Talk, Real Reach: Connecting with Students in the Real World

This session gives teachers practical tools they can actually use and a space to reflect on what it really means to reach kids right now. It is not about being perfect. It is about being present, intentional and open to doing things differently so both students and teachers can thrive.

Activating Students as Storytellers for your Class, School and District

Participants will gain both soft and hard skills through hands-on learning opportunities that elevate student voices while helping schools and districts better communicate the incredible work already happening.

Classroom Management Workshop: Practical Applications

This workshop is an opportunity for teachers to share their experiences and good teaching classroom management tools. This session will provide new and effective classroom management tools you can apply immediately.

How Good Professional Behaviors Can Develop into Good Teaching

The session is designed to help current and future teachers build the skills they need to grow with confidence and make a strong professional impression.

Why Attend?

At the Good Teaching Conference, you'll:



Connect with colleagues from across the state who share your passion for teaching.



Grow through interactive, practical workshops that you can immediately apply in your classroom.



Be inspired by the collective energy of educators working together, united in purpose.

Don't miss this opportunity to recharge, reimagine your practice and return to your school with new ideas and a stronger network of support.



REGISTER TODAY

To learn more and register for the conference, visit the Good Teaching Conference webpage. Register by Oct. 24.

Leading with Heart:

Lillianne Miller's Path to Teaching and Advocacy



Lillianne Miller is an aspiring educator at Mary-of-the-Woods College. She became an ISTA member during the 2025 early enrollment period and has been very active in her school club, where she serves as president. After graduating early this fall, Lillianne hopes to be an elementary school teacher, as well as teach special education.

Q. What sparked your interest in becoming a teacher?

During the second semester of my senior year of high school, I was offered an internship. I originally wanted to be a therapist, so I was planning to go to Mary-of-the-Woods for psychology. However, since I was still a minor at the time, I couldn't do an internship in the mental health facility in town. So, it was recommended that I work at an elementary school. For five months, I spent half of every day at an elementary school in a second-grade classroom and completely fell in love. My mentor teacher was amazing and allowed me to be very hands-on. If she ever took a day off, I acted as the substitute teacher. It was just a great experience overall. Once I graduated from high school, I started at the Woods, and the rest was history.

Q. What do you hope to focus on or accomplish as club president?

We're having our first call out meeting this Thursday and we've been blasting it everywhere. We had our first meeting right before the first day of school and all of us came. We had all our matching T-shirts on and we sat there and just talked to all the students about the opportunities offered by joining. We passed around a sign-up sheet and had 30 people who wanted to join. We're always sharing information about field experiences, upcoming events, important information, etc.

Next month, we're preparing to host different training courses that you must have, like CPR training, so that we can all do them together. Making sure we are all set up for success is like my number one goal, honestly.

Q. What do you do to decompress to prioritize your self-care?

I just recently joined a book club over the summer. We only meet once a month. You read at your own pace and then it's kind of like a big party. There's about seven of us and we meet over food - all the food is based off the book and we dress up. So that's fun and it's something to look forward to. Outside of that, I like to go to the gym. I've been big on walks recently. We just had the diversity walk that Indiana State University hosts. I participated with the photographers I work alongside. I'm a nature girl through and through, so I do anything that allows me to be outside.

Q. What do you hope your students will take away from you?

I want my students to always know that it's okay to fight for the underdog. Don't try to fit in. Do your own thing. Like be that star that you want to be but also be down to earth. Like you want a good mix of both. I want them to know that I always encourage them to be their own person.

TEACHING WITH PURPOSE:

Honoring Dedication at
Home and Abroad



Chunmei Guan from Logansport High School was named an NEA Foundation Global Learning Fellow. Guan was selected from a competitive national pool of applicants and will participate in online coursework and webinars, a two-day professional development conference in Washington D.C., and a 10-day summer field study in South Africa. Upon completion of the program, the 2025-26 Fellows will become part of an active, 500+ educator alumni group that supports their continued growth and leadership in global education. Congratulations Chunmei.



Find out more information on the NEA Foundation Global Learning Fellowship.



ISTA member **Lisa Kroll** kicked off her eleventh year in the classroom with some fun first-day photos! Wishing all ISTA members and Hoosier students a safe, inspiring and successful 2025-26 school year.



ACTIVE NEA RA DELEGATE ELECTION

ACTIVE NEA RA DELEGATE ELECTION GUIDELINES 2026 AND 2027 NEA Representative Assembly State Delegate Election

The 2026 NEA Representative Assembly will be held in Denver, CO, from July 3 – 7. The 2027 NEA Representative Assembly will be held in Indianapolis, IN, from July 1 – 5.

Following are election guidelines for state delegates to the 2026 and 2027 NEA Representative Assembly meetings as approved by the ISTA Board of Directors at the July 2025 meeting.

NOMINATION RULES

1. Between October 13, 2025, and November 7, 2025, there will be a period of open nomination for state delegates. State delegates shall be required to participate in Indiana caucus meetings in the city where the Assembly is being held as well as all sessions of the 2026 and 2027 NEA Representative Assembly meetings (see dates and locations above).

2. NEA active, life and education support members may participate in the nomination and election of state delegates. Nominations will be accepted for both Category 1 members and Category 2 members as outlined below.

3. A petition for nomination of approximately 32 state delegates (final number to be determined by NEA membership records on January 15, 2026) will be provided to all members.

4. Nominations must be made in writing and signed by the nominee. **Education position (Category 1* and 2** must be completed).** Candidates may list a maximum of three qualifications. Each statement must be six words or fewer.

***Category 1 members:** Includes NEA active members who are not supervisors¹ and NEA life members who are not supervisors, retired or staff.

****Category 2 members:** Includes NEA active members who are supervisors¹, NEA-Retired life members², 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.

5. Completed petitions for nomination must be forwarded to the Office of the Executive Director, ISTA, 150 W. Market St., Suite 900, Indianapolis, IN 46204, postmarked on or before midnight, November 7, 2025, or hand-delivered by 4:30 p.m. ET on the same day.

6. Persons whose nominations are received by the executive director as stipulated shall constitute the properly certified candidates.

**Supervisor and administrator shall mean any person who has continuing authority to hire, evaluate, transfer, discipline, dismiss or otherwise direct employees or to effectively recommend any of the aforesaid actions (Bylaw 12-1.f.).*

***NEA members who are eligible to hold an NEA active life membership and an NEA-Retired membership (either retired annual or retired life) have a choice. For delegate allocation purposes (as well as others), they may choose to be considered as an NEA active life member or an NEA-Retired member, but not both. In the absence of notification from the member, NEA will assume that these dual members will maintain their retired membership for governance purposes and the NEA active life membership will be placed in a hold status.*

7. All nominated names will be posted and regularly updated on the ISTA website at ista-in.org/nea-ra until the petition for nomination deadline.

CAMPAIGN RULES

1. Following close of nominations on November 7, 2025, names and qualifications of all candidates will be published and mailed to all Category 1 and Category 2 members residing in Indiana and contiguous states.

2. The official mailing list of ISTA and/or NEA shall not be made available to any candidate for the purpose of campaigning for an NEA state delegateship.

3. Campaign materials may contain references to ethnic heritage.

4. No local, district, state or national dues money may be used to promote the candidacy of an individual or groups of individuals.

ELECTION RULES

1. The election for state delegates and successor delegates to the 2026 and 2027 NEA Representative Assembly meetings is for a two-year term and shall be conducted between January 26, 2026, and February 27, 2026.

2. Ballots will be distributed on or before February 2026, to all Category 1 and Category 2 members residing in Indiana and contiguous states whose membership forms have been processed by NEA.

3. Names will be placed on the ballot in order as drawn from a common receptacle by the executive director or agent with appropriate witnesses.

4. Each ballot shall contain a list of the properly certified candidates. No other information about candidates may be included on the ballot.

5. Each eligible member may vote for any number of candidates not to exceed 31 Category 1 and one Category 2 (or final number to be determined by NEA records). Any ballot on which more votes appear than the total allowed in a given category shall not be counted for that category only.

6. Ballots must be returned in the official ballot envelope marked "Active Delegate Ballot" which has been placed inside another envelope. **MEMBERS ARE REQUIRED TO USE THE ENVELOPE SUPPLIED WITH THEIR RETURN ADDRESS ON THE OUTSIDE ENVELOPE TO MAKE MEMBERSHIP VERIFICATION POSSIBLE.**

7. Only official ballots meeting these rules which are received by the Office of the Executive Director, ISTA, 150 W. Market St., Suite 900, Indianapolis, IN 46204, postmarked on or before midnight February 27, 2026, or hand-delivered by 4:30 p.m. ET on the same date shall be counted.

8. The ballots shall be separated from outside mailing envelopes, tabulated and certified by the designated counting agency.

9. Results of the election shall be determined by the above agency in the following manner:

- The top 31 candidates (or final number to be determined by NEA records) in Category 1 receiving in rank order a plurality of votes cast shall be declared state delegates.

- The top one candidate (final number to be determined by NEA records) in Category 2 receiving a plurality of the votes cast shall be declared state delegates, if applicable.
- Successor delegates (alternates) shall be all those candidates receiving a plurality in each category in rank order following the certified delegates.

10. All certified state delegates and successor delegates shall be notified of their rank order by email as soon as possible after the results are known.

11. Notification of Indiana's certified state delegates and successor delegates shall be sent by ISTA to NEA Membership Records Office by May 15, 2026.

12. Names of all certified state delegates shall be published and made available to all local associations.

13. If a member is elected as both a local and state delegate, the member must notify the local affiliate and ISTA in writing of the position accepted and the one refused within five days after being notified by ISTA by email of being elected as a state delegate. Acceptance of one position relinquishes claim to the refused position. Failure to comply with this rule results in the state delegate position being declared vacant.

14. Each certified state delegate shall receive funds for expenses as allocated in the ISTA budget.

15. Ballots shall be impounded by ISTA for two years.

CHALLENGE RULES

Any challenge to these rules, or any activity or result governed by them, shall be submitted in writing to the Office of the Executive Director, ISTA, 150 W. Market St., Suite 900, Indianapolis, IN, 46204, by March 16, 2026.

If necessary, the ISTA Executive Committee will meet to review and act upon any submitted challenges. Any Executive Committee member who is a candidate for a position involved in a challenge shall be ineligible to participate as an Executive Committee member in the pertinent deliberations.

The Office of the Executive Director will notify all involved parties of Executive Committee action.

**PETITION FOR NOMINATION – ACTIVE ELECTION
FOR CANDIDATES FOR ISTA STATE DELEGATE TO 2026 AND 2027
NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY MEETINGS**

I hereby declare my eligibility and candidacy as ISTA State Delegate to the 2026 and 2027 NEA Representative Assembly meetings.

Candidate Information

***These fields are required for this registration form to be processed.**

*First Name: _____ Middle Name/Initial: _____ *Last Name: _____

ISTA ID#: _____ Local Association: _____

*Home Mailing Address _____ *City _____ *State _____ *Zip Code _____

Phone: (circle one) home school cell

Phone number: _____

School email: _____ Home email: _____

Education Position: (must circle one) Category 1* Category 2**

*Category 1: Includes NEA active members who are NOT supervisors and NEA life members who are not supervisors, retired or staff.

**Category 2: Includes 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.

You may list three Association activities. Each statement must be six words or fewer.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SEND TO: Office of the Executive Director
ATTN: ACTIVE CANDIDATE NOMINATION
150 W. Market St., Suite 900
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Must be post-marked on or before
midnight November 7, 2025, or hand-
delivered by 4:30 p.m. ET on the same
date.

**PLEASE WRITE "ACTIVE CANDIDATE
NOMINATION" ON YOUR ENVELOPE.**

Signature of Nominee

ISTA-RETIRED DELEGATE ELECTION

ISTA-RETIRED ELECTION GUIDELINES

Below are the two-year term election guidelines for the 2026 and 2027 ISTA Representative Assembly (RA) retired delegates and alternates and NEA RA retired delegates and alternates. For 2026, the ISTA RA will be held on April 18, 2026; the NEA-Retired Annual Meeting will be June 30-July 1, 2026, and the NEA RA on July 3-7, 2026, in Denver, Colorado. The 2027 NEA Representative Assembly will be held in Indianapolis, IN, from July 1 – 5. These procedures have been developed by the ISTA-Retired Executive Committee and approved by the ISTA-Retired District Council.

The guidelines are as follows:

NOMINATION RULES

1. There will be a period of open nominations of candidates for ISTA RA retired delegates and NEA RA retired delegates (terms stated above and below).
2. Only ISTA-Retired members who have retired from their education positions are eligible to participate in the nomination and election of the open positions listed above.
3. The **Retired Petition for Nominations** and the **Election Procedures for 2026 and 2027 terms** will be printed in the fall Advocate and delivered to retired members' mailboxes. The election procedures will also be printed in the retired newsletter, The Chalkboard, and posted on the ISTA website.
4. Nomination petition forms printed in the fall Advocate may be cut out or copied from the Advocate. The form must be signed by the nominee. ISTA will verify your membership ID number. Nominees may list three qualifications and any such statements must be six words or fewer.
5. The petition of nomination must be returned to the Office of ISTA-Retired, Attn: ISTA-Retired Candidate Nomination, 150 W. Market St., Suite 900, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2875, and must be postmarked on or **before midnight, November 7, 2025, or hand-delivered no later than November 7, 2025, 4:30 p.m. ET to the office of ISTA-Retired.**
6. Persons whose nominations are received by the Office of ISTA-Retired, as stipulated above, shall constitute the properly certified nominees.

CAMPAIGN RULES

1. Following the close of the nominations on **November 7, 2025**, the names of all candidates and three listed qualifications will be printed in the winter Advocate along with the ballot and mailed to all ISTA-Retired members, who have retired.
2. The official mailing list of the eligible ISTA-Retired voters shall be made available upon request to any candidate to be used only for campaigning for the open seats for which they are running. The candidate requesting the lists are responsible for all costs in their campaign.
3. Campaign materials may contain references to the candidate's own ethnic heritage.
4. No dues money — local, district, state or national — may be used to promote the candidacy of any individual or groups of individuals running for office.

ELECTION RULES

1. The election for ISTA RA retired delegates and alternates, and the NEA RA retired delegates and alternates shall be conducted between January 16, 2026, and February 26, 2026. The election rules will also be posted on the ISTA website and included in the August/September and November/December ISTA-Retired newsletter, The Chalkboard.
2. Ballots will be included in the ISTA winter Advocate and mailed in or before February 2026 to all ISTA-Retired members whose membership forms have been processed by ISTA by December 2025.
3. The names will be placed on the ballot in the order determined by drawing from a common receptacle by the executive director or designee with appropriate witnesses.
4. Each ballot shall contain a list of the properly certificated candidates. No other information about candidates may be legally included on the ballot.
5. An eligible member may vote for up to thirty-two (32) ISTA-RA retired delegate candidates and six (6) NEA RA retired delegate candidates. Those candidates, beyond the winning candidates, shall be ranked in order and serve as alternates. Any ballot on which more votes appear than the total allowed shall not be counted.
6. **Ballots must be returned in the official ballot envelope included in the winter Advocate marked ISTA-Retired Ballot. ISTA-RETIRED MEMBERS ARE REQUIRED TO PLACE THEIR NAME AND RETURN ADDRESS ON THE ENVELOPE TO MAKE MEMBERSHIP VERIFICATION POSSIBLE. IF NO NAME IS PLACED ON THE ENVELOPE CONTAINING THE BALLOT, IT WILL VIOLATE THE RULES AND NOT BE COUNTED.**
7. Only those official ballots meeting the rules, and which are postmarked on or before midnight **February 26, 2026**, shall be counted.
8. After verification of membership, the ballots shall be separated from the mailing envelopes, be tabulated and certified by the designated counting agency.
9. The results of the election shall be determined by the above agency in the following manner:
 - All candidates for ISTA RA retired delegate and NEA RA retired delegate will be ranked in order (identified below), with two-year terms as follows:
 - o ISTA RA retired delegate for the 2026 and 2027 meetings.
 - o NEA RA retired delegate for the 2026 and 2027 meetings.
10. The certified ISTA RA retired and NEA RA retired representatives shall be notified of his/her rank order in writing as soon as possible after the results are known.
11. The ballots shall be impounded by ISTA for two (2) years.

CHALLENGE RULES

1. Any challenge to these rules or any activity or result governed by them shall be submitted in writing to the Chairperson of the Elections Committee, in care of the Indiana State Teachers Association, 150 W. Market St., Suite 900, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2875, by **March 15, 2026**.
2. If necessary, the ISTA Elections Committee will meet as soon as possible after receiving such challenge to review and act upon any submitted challenges. Any Elections Committee member who is a candidate for a position involved in a challenge shall be ineligible to participate as an Elections Committee member in the pertinent deliberations.
3. The executive director or designee will notify the appropriate party of the action of the Elections Committee.

**PETITION FOR NOMINATION - RETIRED ELECTION
FOR CANDIDATES TO THE ISTA RA AND NEA RA MEETINGS
2026 - 2027**

I hereby declare my eligibility and candidacy for (select one or both):

- ☐ ISTA Representative Assembly retired delegate
☐ NEA Representative Assembly retired delegate

Candidate Information

***These fields are required for this registration form to be processed.**

*First Name:

Middle Name/Initial:

*Last Name:

ISTA ID#:

Local Chapter:

*Home Mailing Address

*City

*State

*Zip Code

Phone: (circle one) home school cell

Phone number:

Home email:

You may list three Association activities. Each statement must be six words or fewer.

1.

2.

3.

SEND TO: Office of ISTA-Retired
ATTN: ISTA-RETIRED CANDIDATE
NOMINATION
150 W. Market St., Suite 900
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Signature of Nominee

Must be post-marked on or before midnight **November 7, 2025**, or hand-delivered by 4:30 p.m. ET on the same date. PLEASE WRITE "ISTA-RETIRED CANDIDATE NOMINATION" ON YOUR ENVELOPE.

FUN STAYCATION IDEAS AROUND INDIANAPOLIS

Whether you're looking for a family-friendly outing, a cultural experience or a little adventure, Indy has something for everyone. Here are some great spots to explore this fall break:



JENNIFER BUTLER

Jennifer Butler is a member of Mooresville CTA. She is a Foreign Language and Literature teacher at Mooresville High School. Butler serves as local co-president, as well as on the Professional Practices and Standards Committee, Bargaining Committee and Legislative Action Team.

INDIANA STATE MUSEUM & INDIANA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Teachers receive free admission (plus validated parking). Perfect for history enthusiasts and curious kids.

RASCAL'S FUN ZONE

Go-karts, arcade games and mini golf make for a great spot for family fun.

THE GARAGE FOOD HALL

A lively food court and market with various local restaurants, drinks and shops.

BROWN COUNTY

A day trip worth taking is just an hour south of Indianapolis. Explore Brown County State Park, art galleries, boutique shops in Nashville, local wineries, covered bridges and scenic hiking trails.

MASS AVE CULTURAL ARTS DISTRICT

Stroll through galleries, shops and visit local restaurants.

DOWNTOWN CANAL WALK

Take a peaceful walk or rent a pedal boat. Use the SpotHero app for affordable parking options in the area.

PINS MECHANICAL CO.

Enjoy duckpin bowling, class arcade games and a rooftop bar for adults.

CARMEL

Walk or bike the Monon Trail, browse the arts and design district and discover unique thrift and vintage shops.

Have a wonderful, safe and fun fall break!





Indiana
State
Teachers
Association

150 W. Market St., Ste. 900
Indianapolis, IN 46204



/istamembers



@ISTAmembers



/indianastateteachers

nea Retirement Program

NAVIGATING YOUR INVESTMENT JOURNEY

Which Path Are You On?

Saving and Planning Workshops for ISTA Members

As part of your membership, NEA Member Benefits and Security Benefit are offering free, local workshops to help members build a successful path to retirement. Regardless of where you're at on your retirement journey, our workshops can help you find answers to your fundamental questions.

Don't miss this opportunity to get on the right path and take control of your retirement journey.

For more information contact Nick Dobelbower

Indiana Regional Vice President, Security Benefit | Nick.Dobelbower@SecurityBenefit.com | 785.438.3078

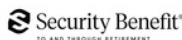
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