



SKI COUNTRY EDUCATOR

September – October 2008

Membership is as crucial now as it has ever been!

The strength of our Association is directly related to our percentage of membership. Ski Country UniServ membership in the 2007-2008 academic year increased by almost 3% overall. We are nearing the magic number of 1200 members, which is our goal for 2008-09.

With a struggling economy and gas at \$4.00 a gallon it's now more important than ever that we are all on board with the Association. The Association that fights for the rights, benefits, and salaries of public school employees: as well as a tireless advocate for a quality public education.

As school districts pinch pennies to pay for transportation and energy costs we need a strong voice in assuring that our members and school employees receive their share of the pie. Your membership assures that we will be heard in school board rooms, the halls of the Colorado legislature, and in the United States Congress.

So when your local Association representatives ask you to become a member say yes and join the 3.2 million educational employees across the nation who are committed to quality education and fair treatment of public education employees.

...Dennis Carlson - Ski Country UniServ

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What are the Benefits of Association Membership?

Besides supporting you local leaders and colleagues in bargaining and local member rights issues, consider the following:

NEA DUES-TAB is a No-Cost insurance for CEA-NEA members.

- \$1,000 of life insurance
- \$5,000 of accidental death and dismemberment insurance
- \$50,000 if you die from an on-the-job accident.
- \$50,000 if you die while on official CEA-NEA-Local Association business
- \$150,000 if you are killed at work and your death is by homicide

The **CEA Legal Defense Fund** provides legal assistance for matters such as retirement, licensing, transfer, discipline, and dismissal. Criminal conduct such as job-related child abuse criminal charges is covered, as is civil litigation.

The **NEA Educators Employment Liability Insurance Program** provides \$1 million in liability insurance coverage for civil and criminal job-related matters.

The **CEA-NEA Attorney Referral Program** offers advice, consultation, and assistance in personal (not job related) legal matters: two free half-hour consultations each year and reduced rates (30% discount) in five personal legal categories: real estate, wills and estates, domestic relations, consumer protection, and traffic violations.

When you belong to our Association you can take advantage of personal, economic **“Member Benefits”** and save money on your dues investment.

- Savings, Deposit, Credit, and Investment programs
- Insurance: Life, Health, Disability, Casualty, Property
- Travel and Leisure Discounts

Check us out at NEA Member Benefits - www.neamb.com - 800-637-4636

Involvement in Political Action is our job as advocates for public education and education employees!

It is nearly impossible for elected officials to convene without making a decision that affects public education. That's why our Association is involved in politics, on top of political issues, and working to protect and advance public education and education employees' issues in the political arena. That's why our members work in school board elections and local mill levy and bond elections. It's why we recommend candidates for the Legislature, statewide offices, Colorado's Congressional delegation, and U.S. President. And it's why we are involved in ballot initiative and referenda campaigns.

**CEA'S POSITION ON
THREE "TRIPLE PLAY" BALLOT ISSUES &
THE "SAFE" INITIATIVE**

NO on #47 – It attacks Colorado workers and our wages, health care, and retirement benefits. We call it the “right to work for less” measure. It would interfere in negotiations between unionized employees and employers, banning mutual agreement that nonmembers pay their share of contract negotiations.

NO on #49 – It violates your Right to Participate by prohibiting you from paying your Association dues by payroll deduction and forcing you to pay them by other means. It intrudes on public school employees' ability to make individual choices about the use of their salaries and paycheck deductions. We believe this decision is best made at the school district level based on each district's needs, not by a statewide vote.

NO ON #54 -- It prevents CEA and our local associations with collective bargaining agreements (called "sole source contracts") from participating in the political process by banning our political contributions. We believe this violates our free speech rights. CEA is a partner in the Protect Colorado's Future coalition, fighting all three anti-employee ballot issues.

We oppose any measure that limits public employees' right to participate in their Association and the political process. These ballot issues unfairly target you as a public employee. For more information go to the following link <http://www.protectcoloradosfuture.org/issues.php> Protect Colorado's Future.

YES on "SAFE" (initiative number to be set) is a serious effort to untangle the complex web of tax measures in Colorado's Constitution. Savings Account for Education (SAFE) is the first major step toward a solution. It moves us closer to the goal of *Believe in a Better Colorado*: adopt a new tax system before the perfect storm hits in 2011 when the Referendum C time-out ends and Amendment 23 funding shrinks, but TABOR spending limits remain. SAFE removes revenue limits and spending requirements from the constitution, and starts a permanent savings account for K-12 education. It protects schools from cuts without squeezing out funding for other essential public services such as higher education, health care and transportation.

Why are CEA and NEA involved in Politics?

Public education policy and politics are inextricably linked: Sad fact or great opportunity? We think it's a great opportunity to influence elected officials for public education's benefit and improvement.

Elected officials – from school boards and state agencies to the State House and the White House – make decisions that affect public school employees. Through law and policy, they make decisions about funding; curriculum; standards and assessments; employee salaries, benefits and retirement; school safety; class size; students with special needs; school facilities; labor laws and collective bargaining; and much, much more.

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It's our job as advocates for public education and education employees!

With that said CEA and Ski Country UniServ are recommending the following candidates in your voting area:

Senate District 16 – Dan Gibbs

Senate District 8 – Al White

House District 56 – Christine Scanlan

House District 61 – Kathleen Curry

US Senate – Mark Udall

US President – Barack Obama

Please remember to vote on November 4th, 2008.