

WHY ARE WE MEMBERS OF THE NEA?

The answer to this question begins differently for everyone. It may have been the liability insurance, an enticing giveaway, or the recommendation of a trusted colleague. Many of you have examined our [Resolution statements](#) and found that NEA's goals match your own.

Over the years, you may not have agreed with every decision that has been made or with every package we negotiated. Yet, you know that we are in your corner every day, every time you need us, working to make your working conditions better so that you can do what you do best: teach the children of Shawnee Mission.

Despite the challenges we've met this year, NEA-Shawnee Mission has continued to support its members in many ways. Here's a partial list of the benefits provided:

- **Negotiators are supported by local dues and training from KNEA**
 - Our team of teachers negotiates on your behalf and will settle for nothing less than the best agreement that is beneficial to all teachers in our district
 - Here are a few "victories" we've achieved by having a strong teacher-led team of negotiators throughout the years
 1. **Additional plan time** for elementary classroom and specialist teachers (Approx. 50 min per day) and for secondary teachers (Approx. 1 class period per day)
 2. **The best salary schedule** in the state of Kansas. The average teacher in Shawnee Mission will make up to \$10,000 more per year than a teacher with the same level experience in neighboring districts.
 3. **Days are Days** – which means you can take a personal day without getting permission in advance (except for blackout dates) Many neighboring school districts require you to give at least 1 week notice for a personal day AND they may deny your request to take that day off!
 4. **Additional Teacher Directed Work Days** – the first day back from Winter Break is now a work day for teachers. Principals (and other staff) can't require you to attend any meetings on work days. This is guaranteed time for you to plan lessons, contact parents, grade assignments, etc.
 5. **Maternity/Paternity Leave** – Following the birth or adoption of a child, employees may be granted up to 12 weeks of parental leave paid or unpaid. The employee may use up to 12 weeks of accumulated sick leave in order to be paid during the parental leave.
 6. **Column Movement throughout the school year** – After earning the appropriate college credits, an employee may move one column (or to the next degree column) on the salary schedule at any time during the year. In other districts, you must wait until the beginning of the next school year to move columns.
- **Representation on the district's PDC, Benefits Committee and Discipline Committee**
 - NEA-SM works closely with district administration to solve problems before they become larger issues. Our members serve on many different district-wide committees and have a voice in the process and a seat at the table.
- **A full time released President (Linda Sieck), Director (Kevin Scarrow) and Assistant (Kelly Shannon) to answer calls and assist members**
- **NEA-SM President meets regularly with the Superintendent**
 - Our NEA-SM President supports the educators of Shawnee Mission by voicing our concerns/issues during monthly meetings with the Superintendent.
- **NEA-SM President meets regularly with the School Board members**
 - Our NEA-SM President has an open and honest relationship with the board members. She attends every board meeting and regularly schedules additional meetings with individual board members.
- **Input about school issues**
 - Building reps meet regularly with building principals to discuss problems and solutions at the building level.
 - NEA-SM and upper-level administrators encourage the building reps and principals to collaborate and work towards solutions that are appropriate for their building.

- **Current programs and problems are addressed with Associate Superintendents**
 - Our NEA-SM President works with Associate Superintendents to solve problems before they become unmanageable. District-wide committees are formed, and NEA-SM members are placed on those committees
- **Our local PAC meets with local and state candidates**
 - Teachers schedule interviews with every candidate in the race to ask questions regarding specific education-related issues and public school funding issues
- **Professional Development classes are available on various topics**
 - NEA-SM offers a variety of Professional Development opportunities that can count towards our PD flex day, Licensure and/or college credit! Here are a few of the options available:
 1. Licensure and Evaluation
 2. What every teacher should know about the negotiated agreement
 3. The Trauma-Responsive Classroom
 4. “I can do it” Workshop on classroom management
 - KNEA offers a variety of Teacher led, Teacher created Professional Development classes that are free for members. Here are a few of the options available:
 1. How teachers can support Immigrant Students and Families
 2. STEM and Problem-Based Learning: Make the Connection
 3. You Have the Right to Know: KESA and ESSA
 4. Engaged Students = Happy Students: Learner Activities
 5. Bullyproof
- **Educators’ Employment Liability Insurance—\$1,000,000 per case**
 - Legal representation in job related incidents
 - Reduced fees for legal service unrelated to the job
- **Read Across America activities**
 - Teacher members dress up as the “Cat in the Hat” and visit elementary schools across the district
- **State-Wide**
 - KNEA lobbyists work in Topeka to promote school funding and protect KPERS
 - KNEA works with the Dept. of Education in Topeka on state standards for students and for teacher licensure
- **Nationally**
 - NEA works with the Dept. of Education and legislators in Washington on the “Every Child Achieves Act”
 - NEA president speaks regularly with the Department of Education about your working conditions and the learning conditions of your students
- **Your KNEA ACCESS card offers free and reduced cost opportunities**
 - The average member who uses the card saved \$600 per year— almost the cost of dues
 - Discounted rates are available through Member Benefits on car rentals, hotels, insurance, magazines, loan programs and every day shopping!

Now more than ever, it is important to share this information with a colleague. See your building representative to get an enrollment form. Approach your friends who are potential members and share the reasons why YOU are a member of NEA!