The concept of public education for the common good is currently under attack. From mass online open-enrollment classes (MOOCs) to Ed TPAs, the pundits and policy makers are working overtime to subvert the good work of faculty and students who struggle for decent working conditions and quality learning conditions. As a public higher education constituency in the largest public education union, we have an opportunity to secure the original purpose of higher education as “a place to think, to engage in thoughtful consideration, promote dialogue and learn how to hold power accountable” or can watch as the university changes into a corporate neoliberal “space for producing profits, educating a docile labor force, and a powerful institution for indoctrinating students into accepting the obedience demanded by the corporate order” (Giroux, 2012). Quite simply put, while those who have the luxury of spending their time and money freely and independently, spend it conjuring up “ideas” intended to reap profits from a previously “public” institution—the rest of us must move to protect our jobs, our students and the public university. Throughout 2013, our colleagues have mobilized on the issues from MOOCs to Ed TPAs. In 2014, faculty and students throughout the world continue to respond by writing articles, holding conferences, organizing demonstrations, using social media and more.

We have designed the NCHE regular annual meeting, this year, to solicit ideas for the promotion of policy language, union activity, legislative policy and new business item ideas to bring forward at the NEA Representative Assembly to take action challenges facing higher education. The following areas will be addressed:

- MOOCs and the proliferation of online universities (Western Governors University)
- The elimination of developmental education
- Whether the NEA should create a professor of the year award?
- Engagement in the National Campaign on Student Debt and College Affordability
- Student Articulation
- Pearson’s Ed TPAs

On Friday morning, issues selected from conversations with NEA higher education members from throughout the United States will be presented. After the presentation, the NCHE executive committee will engage members in a conversation on a courses of action. Many of you have asked NCHE to develop position papers, draft policy statements or ask the NEA to take a stand against a particular issue. This year, the higher education conference will be used as an organizing event. We will respectfully listen to short presentations and decide what direction we wish to take. For example, do we want to draft a NCHE position on a topic, request an amendment to NEA legislative policy or draft a New Business Item for the Representative Assembly? We may also decide not to promote action, but to instead research and develop a solid position paper on a topic representing NCHE. In some cases, we may solicit papers from members. On the other hand, you may wish to volunteer to write about a topic, draft a tentative position statement or a New Business Item. For example, the NEA Membership Advisory Committee drafted a statement as a possible NBI (see page 2).

Our first meeting begins on Friday morning. I look forward to spirited conversation that leads to action.
NCHE Ex Committee Proposes RA Endorsement Policy Change

To expedite the endorsement of at-large candidates for the National Education Association (NEA) Board of Directors, the NCHE executive committee agreed by consensus to change the current endorsement policies.

Currently, Section 2 of the NCHE’s Policy and Procedures document follows Article VII, Section 4, of the Election Procedures of the NCHE’s Constitution, which requires that all candidates running for governance positions win at least a fifty percent majority of the vote when more than two candidates run for a position.

When this requirement cannot be met during a caucus session during the NEA Representative Assembly (RA), the NCHE effectively waives its right to offer a timely endorsement of NEA Board of Director candidates. To ensure that the NCHE can make timely recommendations, the executive committee proposes the new language presented in the box.

To become effective, two-thirds NCHE members present at the Regular Annual Meeting must approve the measure by secret ballot vote.

NCHE Schedule

The NCHE meetings will follow a different schedule. Instead of meeting Thursday, the meeting will start Friday morning. Nominations for candidates running for open NCHE executive committee seats and NEA executive committee candidates seeking endorsements will present during the morning session. The vote is set for first session.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>6 to 7:30 PM</td>
<td>NCHE and ELA reception</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>8:30 to 10:30 AM</td>
<td>NCHE meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10:30 to 11:30 AM</td>
<td>NEA Advisory Committee on Membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11:30 AM to 12:30 PM</td>
<td>NCHE meeting resumes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>8 to 11 AM</td>
<td>NCHE meeting resumes</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Proposed Language Change of Candidates for Positions Announced After the RAM

All at-large candidates for the NEA Board of Directors, nominated after the NEA director positions are declared open in June and seeking the NCHE endorsement, shall be elected by majority vote. If not all endorsements are made on the first ballot through a majority vote, then a run-off shall be held with candidates endorsed by a plurality.

Current language

If a position is announced after the Regular Annual Meeting the NCHE President shall invite candidates for the position, or their representative, to address the Council before an endorsement vote is taken. The time and place for their presentations shall be set by the NCHE President. After these presentations the candidate receiving a majority of the secret votes cast by the NCHE members present and voting shall be the officially endorsed candidate. At the Summer Meeting two-thirds of the members present and voting may vote to suspend the rules to endorse by a voice vote.

Student Debt and College Affordability Proposed NEA RA New Business Item

We recommend NEA organize and execute a priority national campaign on college affordability and student debt such as a national week of action. Develop and deliver a message to the public on the impact of continued defunding of state colleges and universities leading to shifting costs to students and families, resulting in spiking costs of higher education. Link the phenomenon of adults carrying massive student debt to the stagnant economy and the war on working people and the middle-class. Expose the disreputable advertising of for-profit and online universities, along with the corporatization of public universities who prey on vulnerable student populations who are encouraged to borrow at unsustainable levels to the benefit of the institution – not the student. Activate all members – pre-K to higher ed – to understand their personal stake in this issue – their students; their own children and grandchildren; their own student debt. Partner with existing organizations – civil rights advocates, campus organizations, immigrant organizations, etc. – to amplify the public voice on this issue. The campaign will stress the links between affordability, speed of graduation and maintaining high quality education. Many states are capping course and degree expenditures through class size, fully online degrees, course monitors (not degreeed professors) and sacrificing quality by not insuring the critical thinking and communication skills necessary for a quality learning experience. Elevate college affordability and student debt into membership organizing campaigns, showing the Association on all levels as the voice of higher education and a powerful, relevant player in an issue that impacts so many members and student families.
Open NCHE Executive Committee Seats

At the Regular Annual Meeting, NCHE members will vote on the open seats of the executive committee. The open seats include secretary/treasurer, membership chair, and two at-large positions.

The following lists the duties of each two-year positions and may elected for the same positions for three consecutive terms.

**Membership Chair**
- Determine recruitment strategies
- Coordinate the recruitment of new members
- Notify members for dues payment
- Oversee registration at the NCHE RAM, as well as the Summer Meeting at the NEA Representative Assembly
- Coordinate the membership drive at the pre-RA Joint Conference on the Concerns of Women and Minorities
- Maintain an accurate membership mailing list
- Reconcile the membership report in coordination with the Program Assistant and the Secretary/Treasurer
- Assist the Vice President as needed with membership outreach
- Other duties as assigned by the President.

**Secretary/Treasurer**
- Maintain an updated file of NCHE Rules and Policies and Procedures as adopted
- Reconcile the receivables report with the Membership Chair
- Review and sign vouchers for all Executive Committee members
- Chair the Financial Review Committee at the Regular Annual Meeting, reviewing the financial records of the Council
- Report financial standing to the NCHE RAM and Summer Meeting
- Recommend a yearly budget for adoption by the Council
- Keep official minutes of all meetings and maintain the official files
- Handle the correspondence of the Council
- Assist the Membership Chair in maintaining an accurate membership mailing list
- Other duties as assigned by the President.

**All Executive Committee Members (Including officers and Membership Chair)**
- Meet prior to the Regular Annual Meeting in early March at the NEA Higher Education Conference site (3 days)
- Run as a delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly
- Attend the NCHE Summer Meeting and the NEA Representative Assembly as a delegate (approximately 7 days)
- Participate in conference calls or meet in person at least six times annually
- Participate in a Fall NCHE Executive Committee Retreat (3 days)
- Serve on committees of NCHE i.e. Davenport Committee, Elections Committee, NEA Endorsement Committee
- Participate actively in NCHE membership recruitment campaigns in both your state and region, as well as during the NEA Representative Assembly
- Attend the appropriate NEA regional conference and lead the higher education caucus discussion there (3 days)
- Testify on behalf of NCHE at NEA budget, legislative, and/or resolutions hearings

Tell Us Your Stories

In an effort to represent and celebrate the work of NCHE members, the council welcomes stories and photos to post either in the eNewsletter, the print newsletter, or on our website once it is established. As send them to Beverly Stewart at bstewart1332@gmail.com. They may not all make it, but we will at least link them in the electronic versions of our publications.
Outline of an organizing campaign

Although many know the nuts and bolts of an organizing campaign, it bears repeating. The following is adapted from a talk Lillian Taiz, president of the California Faculty Association, gave at the January Campaign for the Future of Higher Education meeting in New York City.

Building a base of support requires the hard work of getting to know members and assessing their commitment level. To prioritize resources, organizers need first to identify its members’ commitment by ranking each member on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being “ready to roll” and 4 being “unmovable.”

The steps to getting to an action require identifying critical team players, assessing membership capacity, selecting actions suitable to capacity, and building actions on each other: sticker day, T-shirt day, e-mail blitzes, or informational picketing before the large rally.

Each action allows organizers the opportunity to assess membership capacity by tracking the people who have worn a sticker, worn a T-shirt, or made calls. Furthermore, action attracts action, which could move 3s to 1s.

Understanding membership capacity should help organizers determine the type of action that is most likely to be successful. If, for example, a large demonstration is out of reach, media-worthy actions can be accomplished with 15 people and the right action.

Once the plan is selected, organizers should develop a calendar that works backwards and notes what needs to be accomplished each week. Among those targets is identifying participants by asking them to sign commitment cards, track progress of members contacted, and assess their commitment.

The best way for building support is talking with members face to face. Some ways of doing that are going to offices in a door-to-door campaign and scheduling hall walks. Calling people or hosting phone-banking sessions is another option. Finally, contacting people by emails with personal messages or asking campus or building leaders in each department to send personal messages to members can also be effective.

Good campaigns also require an assessment of resources by committing enough time or money to make the plan successful. They include logistics, graphics, and training. A well-organized and executed plan builds member confidence in the ability to be successful.

Finally, organizers should reach out to other allies or groups who are interested in preserving quality education, such as students, parents, and community members.

When it is over, event organizers should preserve the database of participants and their contact information and debrief by considering what worked, what did not work, and what could be done better in a future campaign. They should be sure to recognize people’s efforts in the campaign.

### Campus Equity Week 2013

The New Faculty Majority, which coordinated 2003’s Campus Equity Week, reported that it broadened its scope beyond the inequities of contingent working conditions and pay to include student debt and race and gender inequity.

The campaign stretched to 27 states, with 141 events on 120 campuses. The effort yielded new networks and alliances with more than 1000 students and faculty nationally, according to Craig Flanery, a NFM organizer.

Thirty-one news stories covered events, including National Public Radio, dozens of blogs, and social media communications.

With donations from the major unions — NEA, AFT, SEIU, and the AAUP, the project was able to purchase promotional items and develop a tool kit for groups to

### Friend NCHE on Facebook!

NCHE has a new Facebook page called the "National Council of Higher Education" Please feel free to invite any and all who are interested in the materials and conversations of concern to Higher Education - Issues, Unionism, Social Justice, Conferences and Academics. Presently the page and its members can be viewed by all. In order to read or participate in the posts you must request membership. Join us today.