

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS
GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
MARCH 20 2021

Call to Order

The General Membership Meeting of the National Council for Education Support Professionals was called to order by President Nwosu on March 20, 2021 at 4:16pm. President Nwosu welcomed all members, guests, and staff. Present were President, Rae Nwosu, Vice President, Vickie Jacquet, Secretary, Lois Yukna, Treasurer, Karen Slade, Regional Directors, Mid Atlantic, Lakilia Bedeau, Southeast, Nelly Henjes, Western, Eddie Chacon, Northeast, Kathy Meltsakos, Pacific, Mary Parrish, Midwest, Mary Ann Rivera, Parliamentarian, Stan Johnson. Liaison to the NEA Elections Committee and the NCESP Council, Therman Evans, Senior Program and Financial Assistant, Corrisa Barker. Director, Great Public Schools, Andy Coons, NEA ESPQ Director, Amber Parker, ESPQ, Jessica Brinkley and NJEA Elections Chair, Antoinette Felder. Ninety two members entered the room at the start of the meeting.

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

The Standards of Conduct provide an opportunity to aspire towards the climate that we want – one of professionalism, inclusivity, and respect – a climate that creates a safe place for all and allows us to honor that. NEA has adopted a Standards of Conduct policy to ensure that all our gatherings are welcoming to all and free from discriminatory, harassing or otherwise unacceptable behavior. Discrimination or harassment based on race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity or expression, or any other characteristic protected by law will not be tolerated. If you experience any discriminatory, harassing or otherwise unacceptable behavior please contact Robert Rodriguez or Hanna Vaandering to report the incident. Thank you for your commitment to ensuring a positive event for all.

NEA 2020 ESP of the YEAR

NEA 2020 ESP of the Year Andrea Beeman welcomed ESP Leaders and guests to the NCESP and stressed how important educator voices are essential now more than ever. We need to continue to be stakeholders and claim ourselves as the central partners in ensuring our students are healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged while ensuring our students have the social and emotional skills to thrive. We need to check in on each other and tend to the social emotional needs and well-being of ourselves and our colleagues. Andrea stressed that your participation is crucial to NCESP and our organization. NCESP is committed to advocating for ESP issues and gives us the platform to discuss our concerns and advocate for the changes we want to see.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

NCESP Vice President, Vickie Jacquet acknowledged we meet on traditional lands served by Indigenous people who lived and continue to live upon this territory and honored the Attakapa and Chitimacha Native Americans who inhabited this area at the

time of the first European encounter. We honor America's First People, all elders, past, present, and emerging. We are called on to learn and share what we learn about the tribal history, culture and contributions that have been suppressed in telling the story of America.

Introductions

NCESP President, Rae Nwosu introduced the NCESP leadership team:

- NCESP Vice President, **Vickie Jacquet** from Louisiana...
- NCESP Secretary, **Lois Yukna**, from New Jersey...
- NCESP Treasurer, **Karen Slade**, from North Carolina...
- NCESP Midwest Regional Director, **Mary Ann Rivera** from Illinois...
- NCESP Northeast Regional Director, **Kathleen Meltsakos** from Massachusetts...
- NCESP Pacific Regional Director, **Mary Parrish** from Alaska...
- NCESP Mid-Atlantic Director, **Lakilia Bedeau** from Kentucky...
- NCESP Western Regional Director, **Eddie Chacon** from Colorado...
- NCESP Southeast Regional Director, **Nelly Henjes** from Florida...

Adoption of the Agenda with Flexibility

NCESP President Nwosu presented the agenda which was emailed to all members. President Nwosu called for any new business items to be added to the agenda.

Without objection, the agenda was adopted with flexibility.

A moment of silence was taken to honor all our educators and those that have lost family members in the last year as a result of the pandemic.

Adoption of Standing Rules

NCESP President, Rae Nwosu called for the adoption of the Standing Rules. **Without objection, the standing rules were adopted.**

Adoption of the 2020 GMM Minutes

NCESP Secretary, Lois Yukna presented the 2020 NCESP General Membership virtual meeting minutes held before the NEA RA which were emailed in advance to all members of the meeting. There were no corrections, additions, or deletions to the minutes. **The minutes were adopted as printed.**

President's Report

NCESP President, Rae Nwosu thanked all ESP's who stood up and stand out on the front lines, in all categories, for all they have done. Our NEA Officers have been there supporting and inspiring us during the Presidential election and appreciates the relationship. The NCESP Executive Committee attended the budget engagement on March 4, 2021 with NEA Secretary-Treasurer Noel Candelaria. We were able to add our thoughts and ideas into the process. We are part of the budget and our voices always need to be in the room. We are the reason our buildings and sites are open. We are

the glue that holds the buildings together. President Nwosu attended the Washington State ESP Conference

NCESP Executive Officer Recommendation Procedure and Voting

NCESP Election Chair, Antoinette Felder announced we will hear from candidates for election to the NEA Executive Committee. There are 4 candidates for two positions on the NEA Executive Committee. You received a copy of the election's procedures in advance of the meeting. The process is as follows:

- Candidates will be allowed 3 minutes to speak before the membership. There will be a timekeeper to ensure timeliness. When time is up, the line will be muted.
- Candidates were given questions in advance and one of the questions will go to each candidate. The candidates were asked to keep their answers brief in consideration of the process and the limited time we have for this meeting.
- At the end of the speeches for the NEA Executive Committee members, the recommendations process will be conducted electronically through a platform called Simply Voting. The results will be announced via email and posted on the NCESP website the next day.
- A majority of the votes shall be required for the NCESP to recommend a candidate for the specific office.

To date, there are 4 candidates for two seats. All 4 candidates will speak and a vote by secret ballot will be taken to recommend.

The following candidates were presented and asked to answer the same question:

- **Matthew Powell**
- **Ron "Duff" Martin**
- **Gladys Marquez**
- **Michael Wesley Jr.**

Please give examples of how you have impacted or advocated for ESP members on the local, state, and national level and if elected, how would you make sure the ESP voice continues to be heard and understood as a member of the NEA Executive Committee?

Members will receive an email from Simply Voting to cast a vote. You will have up to 30 minutes after the close of the meeting to vote.

NCESP Reports

NCESP Treasurer, Karen Slade provided the budget report which was forwarded to all members. The report was presented at the NCESP General Membership meeting and was approved. There are no changes to the budget. The new proposed budget will be presented during the June 2021 NCESP General Membership meeting at the NEA RA.

NCESP Vice President, Vickie Jacquet provided the NCESP membership report and plan:

- 17 – Associate Members
- 60 – Individual Members
- 3 – Organizational memberships - Michigan, Middlesex County and Education Minnesota

- 1 – Platinum State Affiliate Sponsorship – New Jersey Education Association
- 3 – Associate members who paid through the 2021-2022 membership year
- 20 – Individual members who paid through the 2021-2011 membership year

Plan - The membership plan/goal is to retain current members and increase by 100 members. Renewal members will receive an application by email and through hustle.

Membership questions were raised regarding the following:

- Renewal of an organizational Membership for Colorado?
- Maryland not included for State Membership.
- What is the cost of an Organizational Membership? \$400.00
- What is the cost of a State Membership? - \$500.00
- What is the difference between an Organizational and State Membership? The difference is State Membership is voting on policy only.

-

Remarks from NEA Officers

NEA President Becky Pringle acknowledged and thanked the NCESP Executive Committee for making sure the voices of ESP's are heard – within NEA and across our nation. President Pringle stated that our work ensures that our students receive all they need and deserve to live into their magnificent brilliance. ESPs are the heroes of our schools and communities and the work ESP's have been doing for the past 12 months has been harder than ever, scary, and exhausting. Your mental, emotional, and physical health has been affected but you have shown your dedication. You continue to support students, families, communities, and each other. NEA members have been faced with inequities in schools – digital divide, hunger, homelessness, but because of educators, the nation saw our students for whom these inequities are a frequent reality. This month marks the 26th year of raising the voices of NEA ESP across the nation. Working together, NCESP can ensure that every student who lives in an underserved neighborhood can one day know what it feels like to grow up in a just community and experience a just school that prepares them to enter a just world. Keep fighting and working together for our students, our educators, for our community and for our nation. Let us continue to create change.

NEA Vice President, Princess Moss acknowledged and thanked the NCESP Executive Committee for empowering, building respect and standing up for education support professionals. Organizing ESP's is so important. It does not just build power and raise the volume of all the voices that make up NEA. Organizing also engages our ESP members to become a more powerful force for change and this is seen in the political arena and in advocacy. If we believe in social justice, and believe in the labor movement, if we believe in union solidarity as an instrument for achieving equity, racial, and social justice, then we have a moral obligation to protect and defend our members, public education, and the students we serve. ESPs represent all the rich diversity that is found in our nation's schools. Within that diversity, you want the absolute best for students and for the education profession. Continue to give your best so that students leave your care prepared to give their best in the future.

NEA Secretary Treasurer, Noel Candelaria acknowledged and thanked the NCESP Executive Committee for their tireless and truly relentless leadership when it comes to protecting and serving the interests and concerns of ESP's. Noel expressed how excited he was to see so many ESP's attend the budget engagement zoom meeting to work to modify the 2nd year of the two-year budget. You shared how important it is for us to continue working and leveraging resources with local and state affiliates to organize and demand a safe work environment for all staff and include everything needed from adequate staffing, cleaning, PPE, vaccines to overall respect as professionals. This means not to be the invisible workforce behind the scenes but to bring forward the vital role everyone plays in ensuring the safety and success of our students, public schools, and public sector members. We must continue to organize and allocate resources to create real power in partnership with state and local affiliates to impact real change that will change the lives of ESP's, students, and communities. You can still provide input into the budget by going to nea.org/budget. Once the budget committee and board vote to move the budget to the RA, the hearing will be on June 28, 2021. NEA grants are available to turn your ideas into execution. As ESP's, you are indispensable to this union – you are crucial to the success of students, educators, and public schools.

NEA ESP Quality

Amber Parker, Director of the NEA ESP Quality Department acknowledged and thanked the NCESP Executive Board and highlighted what is being done to increase access to professional learning offerings and related supports:

ESP Mentoring:

- ESP Q team worked with teams from nearly 60 local affiliates to create the ESP Mentoring programs.
- ESP Q worked pre-covid in person with locals which limited the number of locals who could participate.
- ESP Q started to build a high-quality version in NEA's online learning management system which will be a blended learning opportunity, with facilitation by ESPQ staff which will allow for more local participation and build the ESP mentoring program.
- The first pilot will be this summer and then made more broadly available.
- The "Supporting Our Own Mentoring" manual is available online at – <https://www.nea.org/sites/default/files/2020-06ESP-Supporting-Our-Own-Mentoring.pdf>

THE ESP Learning Network: ESP Webinar Series

- Next Webinar – April 15, 2021 7:00-8:15pm focusing on ESP Mentoring and sharing lessons from the field.
- Looking ahead with a lens to increasing access by translating 12 past webinars into Spanish and providing Closed Captioning beginning in April

ESP Conference:

- ESP of the Year Award Celebration – Friday, March 26, 2021 at 7:00pm est. Celebrate with the nominees, hear from NEA President Becky Pringle and the 2020 NEA ESP of the Year Andrea Beeman and party with DJ Spinderalla.

In closing, Amber expressed on behalf of the entire ESP Quality department, the deep appreciation for everything ESP's have done in their schools and communities during the pandemic and for your participation and leadership in this conference. Seeing you has been a positive boost of energy for ESP Q department.

NCESP Election

In June, NCESP members will be voting to fill the Southeast Regional Director seat for a two-year unexpired term.

- Only members in the Southeast can vote for this position. Members in the Southeast Region include Louisiana, Arkansas, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, and Mississippi.
- If you are interested in running for the NCESP Southeast Regional Director position, please send your Declaration of Candidacy to the elections chair by May 1, 2021. You can find a candidate declaration form on the NCESP website at nea.org/ncesp.

Proposed Amendments

If you have any proposed changes to the Constitution and Bylaws, please send them to President Nwosu by **May 1st, 2021**. Per the bylaws, we will send you any proposed changes to the bylaws 30 days in advance of the 2021 June membership meeting that occurs before the NEA RA.

Voting

Voting will be extended to 7:00pm. Questions were raised regarding membership voting if had they just joined. According to the Constitution and ByLaws – Article III – Membership -Section 3 – Membership Dues & Sponsorship – To be eligible to vote, dues must be paid prior to the start of an NCESP General Membership Meeting.

NCESP Virtual Booth

Please join the NCESP Virtual Booth on Sunday, March 21, 2021 at 10:00am to engage in conversation prior to the closing session.

Motion to adjourn.

Thank you all for attending and I hope to see you all virtually at our June NCESP General Membership Meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 6:09pm **without objection**.

Respectfully submitted,

Lois Yukna
NCESP Secretary