



Ron Duff Martin NEA Executive Committee

Experience/background as an educator. I didn't always want to be a teacher. My first dream was to be a Lutheran Pastor because I knew I wanted to serve people and make a difference in people's lives. Early on in my college experience things happened and education became a calling. My first experiences started in college as a member of the Student Wisconsin Education Association (now Aspiring Educators) and then I was hired to work in the Eau Claire Area School District as a middle school at-risk teacher/coordinator. I spent 23.5 years teaching 7th and 8th grade social studies, coaching, serving as an advisor and actively involved in my school community. Currently I am a teacher on special assignment.

Past positions and experiences with the NEA. When I went to college, I helped start a student chapter of the NEA/WEAC at the University of Wisconsin Eau Claire and served in many positions, including serving as the state president of the Student Wisconsin Education Association. When hired in the Eau Claire Area School District I became a building representative, served on various district and union committees as well as serving numerous officer positions including president. I also had the opportunity to serve on many state (WEAC) committees and the WEAC Board of Directors. I served as secretary/treasurer, Vice President and served two terms as President of WEAC. On the national level I served on many taskforces and committees, including NEA Resolutions Committee and the Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee. I served as a regional representative, treasurer, vice chair and chair of the American Indian/Alaska Native Caucus. I served on the NEA Board of Directors and served as the vice president of the National Council of State Education Associations. Currently I serve on the Executive Committee where I have experienced numerous leadership positions. Some of those include co-chairing the Board Leadership Development Work Group, Executive Committee co-lead of all things Education International, the Gun Prevention/Safety NBI Task Force, the Artificial Intelligence Task Force, NEA 3.1(g) Team and various NEA RA committees/workgroups. I have been heavily engaged and involved in NEA's Racial and Social Justice work.

How can NEA expand its focus on higher education members and issues affecting them such as threats to academic freedom and tenure?

NEA is one incredibly large family, and we can and must do better for all members. I believe there is so much opportunity in organizing and advocating for and with our Higher Education members. I believe we must invest in both organizing and supporting our state affiliates as they work to address the needs of Higher Education. Intentionally focusing on organizing and advocacy with and for our Higher Education members will strengthen the organization and allow us to meet some of the needs of our Higher Education members. We know there are threats to academic freedom and tenure, both issues that if we work with our Higher Education members and develop a "toolkit" that will help leaders in the field advocate and give guidance to state and local affiliates we can hopefully stifle these attacks. Ultimately it comes down to leaders at the national level working closely, side by side with Higher Education leaders/members. This means listening to the issues as well as helping to organize membership in each of our state affiliates.