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MEMORANDUM

TO: Delegates of the 2020 NEA Representative Assembly

FROM: **Becky Pringle**
Vice President, National Education Association
GPS Fund Oversight Committee Chair

DATE: July 2020

RE: Great Public Schools Fund Grants – 2020 Annual RA Report

Attached is the report on the NEA Great Public Schools Fund (“GPS Fund” or the “Fund”) for fiscal year 2019–2020.

Beginning with the 2013–2014 membership year, the annual membership dues of active members of the Association, as computed pursuant to Bylaw 2-7a, were increased by three dollars (\$3.00) as required by Bylaw 2-7p. This dues increase is allocated for a Special Purpose Fund to help NEA affiliates advance the goal of great public schools for all students in the form of GPS Fund Grants.

The Board of Directors has developed guidelines to implement Bylaw 2-7p, which were last updated in February 2020.

This report provides a summary of GPS Fund activities since the 2019 Representative Assembly.

NEA GPS FUND

Annual RA Report July 2020

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Rebecca (Becky) Pringle
NEA Vice President

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NEA Secretary-Treasurer

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NEA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kim A. Anderson

SUMMARY

In July 2013, NEA members voted to develop a fund that would provide grants to state and local affiliates with promising projects and ideas to help improve student success. This fund became known as the NEA Great Public Schools Fund (GPS Fund). Monies are provided to help affiliates demonstrate leadership in enhancing the quality of public education and to assist in the development and implementation of an agenda that engages members, with an emphasis on student-centered success and well-being through union collaboration.

The goals of the GPS Fund are:

1. To generate and develop innovative ideas designed to promote sound practice;
2. To capture key learnings that promote student success;
3. To develop and deliver supports by members for members that promote professional excellence;
4. To establish new organizational partnerships toward improving professional practice and aligning it with organizational priorities; and
5. To cultivate sustainable programs to be reproduced and amplified by other affiliates to make meaningful change in public education for educators and students.

This commitment by NEA members to transforming education has resulted in the awarding of 156 GPS Fund grants since inception, totaling \$44.6 million to 88 different affiliates in 43 states plus the Federal Education Association.

HISTORY OF AWARDS*

FISCAL YEAR	# OF APPLICATIONS	# OF AWARDS
2013-14	69	40
2014-15	65	17
2015-16	35	22
2016-17	44	22
2017-18	61	19
2018-19	37	17
2019-20	42	19
TOTALS	353	156

FISCAL YEAR	\$ AMOUNT REQUESTED	\$ AMOUNT AWARDED
2013-14	\$23.1 million	\$13.4 million
2014-15	15.9 million	3.1 million
2015-16	10.4 million	4.0 million
2016-17	15.8 million	5.5 million
2017-18	26.2 million	6.3 million
2018-19	17.8 million	6.2 million
2019-20	20.7 million	6.1 million
TOTALS	\$129.9 million	\$44.6 million

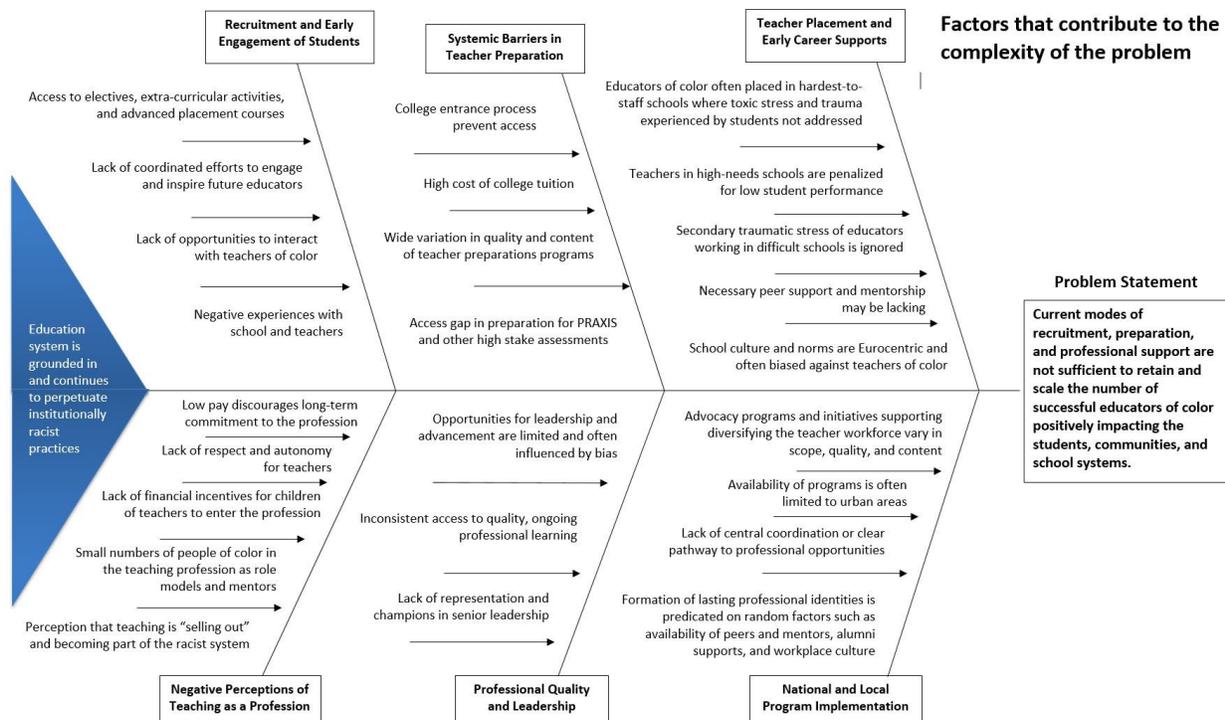
*A list of all awarded GPS Fund grants can be found on the NEA.org website: <http://www.nea.org/grants/gpsfundgrants.html>

IN FOCUS FOR 2019-2020

Networked Improvement Community (NIC) Pilot

In October 2019, the NEA Center for Great Public Schools held a 2-day training event to mark the launch of its Student-to-Teacher Pathway Networked Improvement Community (NIC). At the event, six GPS Fund grantees working on a similar problem – and representing a cross-section of local and state affiliates from around the country – came together to learn the basics of NICs. The goal of the pilot NIC was to use improvement science as a tool to rapidly test new ideas and activities within the ongoing grant work, while supporting cross-affiliate collaboration and sharing.

To help identify factors that contributed to the complexity of the problem being addressed by the group, NIC participants created a working “fishbone diagram” at the launch event, which helped to organize and provide context for the problem being addressed.



After the training event, grantees used this frame to continue their work on-site. Virtual meetings of the NIC were held to continue sharing and learning in order to leverage successes and learn from failures.

The regular check-ins consisted of each affiliate discussing the following prompts:

- What are you trying to accomplish?
- What changes have you recently made?
- How did you know if the change was an improvement?
- What do you plan to do next?

The framework created through the pilot and engagement of the participating affiliates will be valuable as the GPS Fund Program continues to explore the use of NICs as a tool to maximize the support, impact, and spread of exemplary grant work.

GPS Fund Grant Guidelines Update

As a living document that is meant to be updated by the NEA Board of Directors as necessary, several changes to the GPS Fund Grant Guidelines were formally proposed by the GPS Fund Oversight Committee and approved by the NEA Board of Directors in February 2020.

Two major changes, which impact 2020-21 grant applications, include turning the Intent to Apply period into an application for a Planning Grant, and changing from a semi-annual to annual GPS Fund award cycle. No changes were made to the criteria for evaluating applications or the process for funding recommendations.

Overview of Changes:

- There is now only one application cycle per year, comprised of two stages:
 - Stage 1 – Planning Grant Application
 - Due by September 15, 2020
 - Open to all NEA affiliates
 - Stage 2 – GPS Fund Application
 - Due by February 1, 2021
 - Open to Planning Grant awardees only
- The Intent to Apply (ITA) period has been eliminated
- Only affiliates that are awarded a Planning Grant will be eligible to apply for a GPS Fund Grant
- If awarded a Planning Grant, affiliates will receive a small amount of funding (up to \$10,000) and other technical assistance from NEA in order to plan, workshop, and flesh out their proposals in anticipation of submitting their full GPS Fund application
- Previously, GPS Fund grantees had a time-consuming checklist of additional items to be completed after award but before funding was provided – the new support given to Planning Grant awardees should eliminate the need for this checklist and grant work should be able to begin much sooner
- Minimum grant request is now \$50,000 (was previously \$25,000)

Priority Focus

To encourage applications that align with strategic NEA initiatives, the Oversight Committee continued to utilize a “Priority Focus” on *Early Career Educators* and *Racial Justice in Education* for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. This created a small bonus opportunity for applications that concentrated on either or both topics. The Priority Focus is reviewed annually to ensure continued compliance with strategic initiatives and promoted publicly on the NEA.org grants site ([here](#)). For 2020-2021, the Oversight Committee has voted to maintain the same two Priority Focus topics.

2019-2020 GPS FUND GRANT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE*

MEMBER	ORGANIZATION
Becky Pringle, Chair	NEA Vice President
Princess Moss	NEA Secretary-Treasurer
Noel Candelaria	President, National Council of State Education Associations (NCSEA)
Brent McKim	President, National Council of Urban Education Associations (NCUEA)
Rae Nwosu	President, National Council for Education Support Professionals (NCESP)
DeWayne Sheaffer	President, National Council for Higher Education (NCHE)
Rudy Burruss	At-large NEA Board Member
Andy Coons	Senior Director, Center for Great Public Schools (CGPS)
Andrea Prejean	Director, Teacher Quality Department (TQ)

**List as of June 2020.*

LIST OF 2019-2020 GRANT AWARDEES

Fairbanks Education Association (Alaska)

Beginning Teacher Induction and Support

Fairbanks Education Association will use its GPS Fund Grant to develop a program whereby experienced, member teachers serve as building-site mentors to support beginning member teachers for their first two years of teaching. Support will be frequent, occurring at least on a weekly basis. Mentors will ideally have 2-3 beginning teachers that they will support. These new teachers will form a small supportive cohort that works together to support one another and not merely seek support from their mentor. It is further expected that as the second-year teachers gain skills, confidence and autonomy, that they will serve as peer-coaches and as role models to the first-year teachers. To ensure that mentors use effective, research-based strategies, they will enroll in a course through University of Alaska - Fairbanks.

Federal Education Association

ESP Professional Development, Leadership Development, and Organization

Federal Education Association will bring ESPs together for professional development from around the U.S. and Guam. The goal is to educate ESPs on racial justice issues and share the Professional Growth Continuum with them, give them time to self-assess, and then provide them with information and opportunities for moving along the continuum. An application form will be created clearly denoting that each local will create a cadre that will bring this training back to their locals and provide ongoing professional development at the local level, while identifying ongoing professional development needs.

Georgia Association of Educators (in partnership with Mississippi Association of Educators)

Pilot for Instruction and Professional Development Fellow

This grant is designed to support a pilot for Instruction and Professional Development Fellows for both the Georgia Association Educators and the Mississippi Association of Educators. Each fellow will be released from the classroom to establish and/or coordinate: focus groups; face-to-face and online professional development (PD); a statewide PD cadre; and statewide and regional PD conferences. The overall objectives of this grant will be to 1) recruit and engage early career educators (ECEs) and education support professionals (ESPs), 2) establish PD cadres of ECEs and/or ESPs in each region of the state, and 3) build capacity across the state in order to organize around instructional, professional, and racial justice issues concerning our early career educators and education support professionals.

Hawaii State Teachers Association (in partnership with Oregon Education Association and Washington Education Association)

Retaining and Engaging Educators of Color and Early Career Educators through Regional National Board Networks

The Hawaii State Teachers Association (HSTA), Oregon Education Association (OEA) and Washington Education Association (WEA) will be collaborating to create a new and innovative professional practice support system focused on recruiting and retaining teachers of color and early career educators. This grant will upset current trends by improving the retention of early career educators and educators of color by investing in their professional practice growth, credibility, and leadership recruiting and retaining teachers of color and early career educators. In the area of racial justice, there is a notable disproportionality along racial lines in each of our states about who seeks National Board Certification, completes the process, achieves certification, and then steps into leadership roles.

While each of the states is proactive in building an educator workforce that is representative of its diverse student populations, they are each challenged with barriers that keep educators of color from advancing in their professional practice. Additional barriers also exist for early career educators to seek this prestigious credential, including access to information about the certification process, costs associated with the assessment and access to support networks as they undertake the arduous process. The national average of years of experience for those achieving board certification is 14 years; however, research shows many early career educators move on well before that point in their career.

Illinois Education Association

Coaching to Develop Trauma Responsive Cultures

IEA will coach educators from being trauma-informed to implementing a trauma responsive approach with a focus on ACES, racial justice, restorative practices and equity, which will result in improved learning for all students when the whole child approach is implemented.

Coaching members with ongoing touch points of information, classroom restorative and racial justice practices will move them into the implementation stage of trauma responsive schools. There is a need to continue to reinforce the strategies and mind-set of trauma responsive schools approach for our students and our communities. From data collected, when educators use classroom strategies focused on supporting students with trauma there is a decrease in absenteeism and improved student learning.

Illinois Education Association (7-state consortium)

Midwest Educators Leading the Profession

Illinois Education Association, as lead for a consortium of seven state affiliates (IL, IN, MN, OH, MI, NE, IA), believes teacher unions should lead the nation in professional practice. There is no other group better positioned to transform the professional learning of new teachers. The components of the grant work include:

- The in-person local union mentor will help acclimate the new teacher to the district, school and union.
- The exemplary teachers will provide a genuine opportunity to embed the ideals of teacher leadership into practice.
- Providing new teachers with substantive professional learning tools and opportunities from a virtual instructional coach to accelerate their progress towards the goal of student success.
- Providing cutting-edge technology to attract and retain new teachers.
- Creating a new role for the union that paves the path forward for a robust professional learning role.

Indiana State Teachers Association

Enhancing the Professional Resource Center and Programs

ISTA will build upon the state affiliate’s current strategic plan for member engagement by enhancing racial justice and trauma sensitive school professional development and supports for its members, in addition to growing/supporting high school Educators Rising programs, the Indiana Student Education Association, early career educators, and Education Support Professionals.

Iowa State Education Association

Defining Success in Developing Equity in Iowa Schools through Training and Coaching

ISEA will use its GPS Fund Grant towards the goal of ensuring Iowa educators are supported by Teacher Leaders in their work, as they strive toward equity for their students, schools, and communities. They plan to accomplish this through professional learning (conferences & Academy courses) for Teacher Leaders that enhance their skills and creates a learning community to support them in their learning and work.

Iowa has a state-funded system of Teacher Leadership and Compensation that has roughly 25% of Iowa teachers in some type of leadership role - from instructional coach to mentor to behavior interventionist. Reaching these Teacher Leaders and helping them develop more focus on racial inequities in our schools, in their coaching practices and our education system will make a significant impact on the entire system.

Louisiana Association of Educators

Recruit, Prepare, and Support Qualified Educators of Color

LAE will be working to increase the number of certified teachers so that students at all schools have access to a well-qualified educator with two different areas of work. The first area of work is to reduce the teacher shortage by creating a pipeline of new educators through educator club sponsorship at the high school level. The second area of work is help some educators overcome a common barrier to teacher certification, the PRAXIS exam. LAE will provide PRAXIS test preparation and content support for uncertified teachers, to educational support personnel, and university students in schools of education. LAE will be collaborating with high schools, universities, and school districts with this work to create great public schools for all students in every zip code.

Maryland State Education Association

MSEA's Praxis Core Preparation Program: Engaging and Supporting Future Educators of Color

MSEA's Praxis Core Preparation Program will engage and support future educators of color to help them receive a teaching certificate. The data strongly suggests that having a teaching force that reflects student diversity positively affects student success. MSEA's program will target future teachers of color and help them pass the standardized entrance exam into a teacher preparation program. This program is engaging traditional future teachers who are current undergrads as well as current education support professionals who are working in the school system and are working on receiving their teacher certificate. By directly supporting future teachers of color on the Praxis Core, MSEA's program is helping to diversify the teaching profession.

NEA-New Mexico

NEA-New Mexico Community Schools Hub Development

The NEA-New Mexico Community Schools Hub builds on NEA-New Mexico's leadership over the past three years in developing community schools in Las Cruces. The Hub will (1) support other New Mexico locals in winning and implementing the community school strategy. The Hub will help locals engage their members, especially ESPs in the advocacy for and work of community schools to overall promote ESP engagement in educator-led school transformation. The Hub will also (2) build capacity around NEA's Community School Improvement Science Micro-Credential Program, which provides locals across the country with a roadmap for implementing best-practice community schools that utilize improvement

science. Finally, the Hub will (3) provide capacity to develop the New Mexico Coalition for Community Schools and (4) continue to support Las Cruces.

Nebraska State Education Association

Building Successful Pathways and Effective Classroom Supports for Educators

NEA’s Great Public Schools Fund is investing in Nebraska’s students, teachers and the state’s future with a grant to recruit, support, and retain teachers in Nebraska. The grant will allow NSEA to help develop a teaching core that reflects its state’s population. Fewer and fewer students are choosing to become teachers. There has been a 50 percent drop in the number of students enrolled in Nebraska colleges of education over the past 10 years. NSEA’s goal is to add to the number of caring, competent teachers who can serve as role models for students while working with a myriad of stakeholders to provide safe and healthy learning environments. With this grant, NSEA will be able to provide professional development in social justice and developing trauma informed classrooms, increasing the skills, knowledge and dispositions of educators.

Oklahoma Education Association

Support for Emergency and Alternative Certified Educators through Member Cadre Led Professional Development

OEA will develop professional development content that prepares educators who receive an alternative certificate to teach in Oklahoma. The primary focus of this grant will be incorporating training from E.C.E. in both racial justice and trauma programs. While some attention is being paid to pedagogy, general knowledge and varying content, the overwhelming need for trauma informed instruction through the lens of racial justice is vital to the success of Oklahoma schools. This process will also identify member leaders who will receive training through a Train the Trainer model to provide professional development to educators who have emergency and alternative certification. These trainings will increase the success of emergency and alternative certified educators in the classroom while better meeting the needs of students who experience racial justice and trauma.

Puget Sound UniServ Council (Washington)

Professional Synergetic Universal Collection (PSUC) Passport of Relevance

The Puget Sound UniServ Council will ensure that its Early Career Educators, as well as all members, find relevancy in their Association by offering opportunities to meet expressed interests, such as:

- Professional development to assist educators in working with students in trauma and helping all students learn.
- Mentoring experiences that help educators grow their professional practice.
- Grow-your-own initiatives that will allow educators to assist the next generation of teachers while attracting students of color to our profession.
- Social and racial justice events that allow Early Career Educators to make a difference, an often described desire.
- Opportunities to connect further with the Association due to the value of information, like SPARKS, certification information, student debt reduction, social events, and member benefits.

Tennessee Education Association

Shifting the TEA IPD Program from Primary Staff-Led Delivery to the Facilitation of Practitioner-Led Professional Development

TEA is shifting their Instruction and Professional Development (IPD) program from a primarily staff-led delivery service to a program that empowers and facilitates practitioner-led professional development. Both new and experienced educators across Tennessee verify the best IPD experiences they have had were those in which they had an active part in design and delivery or were those led by their peers. Education Week and the Learning Policy Institute have published reports on the positive results on student learning and teacher retention when a consistent program of practitioner-led professional development is implemented.

United Teachers of Dade (Florida)

UTD Early Career Educator Support & Mentoring Program

The UTD Early Career Support and Mentoring Program will build capacity of its local affiliate by decreasing the number of educators (Teachers and ESPs) leaving the field of education, increasing the number of educational support professionals that transition into teaching positions, increasing union membership, and engaging union members so they can be fully active in the union at the local, state, and national levels. UTD knows that if it reaches this overarching goal, then it will empower their educators and ultimately lead to greater student success.

United Teachers Los Angeles (California)

Supporting Community School Implementation Best Practices by Strengthening an LAUSD Community School Professional Learning Community of Community School Coordinators and Other Key Stakeholders and by Strengthening Parent/Community Engagement

In 2019, with the strike as a culmination of 3 years of work, UTLA and Reclaim Our Schools LA (ROSLA) successfully won the investment of \$12 million in district dollars to transform 30 schools into Community Schools. UTLA and ROSLA also won the creation of an LAUSD Labor-Community-Management Partnership table, which makes all significant implementation decisions related to the new Community Schools. NEA's Great Public Schools Grant will allow UTLA to support a Community School Professional Learning Community (CSPLC) of school teams to help ensure best practice implementation and transformative outcomes. The CSPLC will work to support Community School Coordinators and other key school and community stakeholders to successfully achieve the LAUSD's Community School benchmarks by coordinating the professional learning and supports for the 30 Community Schools.

Vermont-NEA

School Library Leadership: Mentoring Matters

Vermont-NEA will collaborate with the Vermont School Library Association Mentoring Advisory Committee and the Program Lead for the University of Vermont School Library Information Science Sequence to identify member leaders in each of the five districts in Vermont to serve as mentors to newly hired librarians. These leaders will be trained with skills that will support them in their role as mentors through a 2-credit course at the University of Vermont and will then be paired with a new hire. A network of communication identifying contacts in each district will be maintained and systemized by the Vermont School Library Association, as the program is developed.

Ongoing (five times annually) professional development will be provided to the Mentors via Zoom, and through content from the Mentoring Matters texts and the America Association of School Library National Standards.

Wyoming Education Association

ESP Growth, Empowerment, and Leadership in Wyoming

WEA is collaborating with local associations, school districts, and community groups across Wyoming to engage classified employees - bus drivers, custodians, food service workers, clerical workers, security personnel, technology professionals, mechanical trades employees, paramedical staff, and paraeducators - in meaningful professional development and professional growth opportunities. WEA is also making a specific effort to support Early Career ESPs in this endeavor in order to build a stronger professional pipeline of ESPs statewide. A priority of this work will be to focus on Wyoming's ethnic minorities working in public education, particularly on the Wind River Indian Reservation and among the many Spanish-speaking communities statewide. Throughout the year, WEA will be holding regional and statewide trainings and conferences.