

# Region 64 Update

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## From the Chair

Fellow colleagues,

If anything within recent time has taught us the importance of maintaining and strengthening our collective voice, it is what we have experienced with the daily attacks against our profession. Education professionals are under attack from the ones who believe we do not deserve to have the benefits we fought for and the recognition we so deserve. They believe we are overpaid, underworked and a burden to society because we steal their hard earned tax dollars in the form of pensions.

While there are many who feel this way, there are just as many who stand with us as we continue to fight for our very existence.

Big business has taken hold of the dark side and legislators such as Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker receive millions to solidify their positions against education employees. The Koch brothers, Walton family and Stand for Children just to name a few have donated billions of dollars to influence legislation and legislators across the country.

This should be nothing new to you as an educator or school employee within our schools. Unless you live under a rock, the daily barrage of ads, articles and TV have made a profound impact on our society.

It seems that we are losing ground in some states with legislation being changed or adopted. That may be true for the short term. The rights of Americans to voice their feelings and stand up for what they believe in are as clear today as it was when our nation was born.

As you read this, recall elections are taking place in Wisconsin to win back the rights of workers in that state.

I am proud to announce that Region 64 will enlist the services of Lake Zurich teacher Adam Hjerpe to head up Region 64's GPA program. Adam will work with our

region to develop a plan in accordance to IEA and begin working to help our region be successful with grass roots political action. Adam will be working with all 3 locals and will sit on the region council.

The members who attended the 2011 NEA RA in Chicago took an unprecedented step to endorse President Barack Obama for re-election to the White House.

We need a president who IS on our side. NEA took this position early in the election cycle because Obama is the goalkeeper for education. The one who can fight the big business attacks and help us protect union rights and the voice of the American worker.

While NEA has publicly expressed their displeasure with the US Dept. of Education Secretary Arne Duncan, make no mistake, Barack Obama IS on our side.

As an IEA and NEA member, you have been asked on many occasions to stand up to protect your rights. Voice your opinion for public education and the rights to give all students the best education they can get.

We must continue to contact our state legislators and lobby congress to ensure our voices are heard. We all have the opportunity to get involved in our union activities and collectively work to ensure our rights.

I would like to thank the members who attended the NEA RA in Chicago. IEA members from around the state assisted in hosting the event and contributed in many ways to it's great success. From our Region 64 members who manned microphones and volunteered as part of the host committee to the delegates who were elected to represent you.

Thank you for all you do....

*Scott Moore*

Region 64 Chair

# Vice President Biden Applauds NEA for Fight for Students, Workers

CHICAGO — Unions are the ones fighting for the middle class and the National Education Association especially is fighting to ensure all students have access to a quality public school, Vice President Joe Biden told thousands of cheering educators Sunday in a stirring speech to NEA's 90th Representative Assembly.

"Thank God for your unyielding belief that in the toughest of circumstances every child, *every child*, deserves a chance," Biden told the audience of nearly 9,000 people. "I just wish those folks who are attacking you now, I wish those folks who are trying to ascribe to you the blame for the worst recession America has had since the Great Depression knew you a little better."

NEA members' fight for their rights as workers, is "about our children," Biden said. "Your fight is about giving them the best chance." He later added, "because of you the American dream will grow faster and further than ever before."

In states across the nation, public school educators and their fellow public employees have come under attack from Republican governors and state legislators. Efforts to curb workers' rights to collectively bargain their contracts, have a say in students' learning conditions and get the benefits that they've earned during their careers have come from legislators in Wisconsin, Ohio, Florida, Michigan, Idaho, Tennessee, and just about every other Republican-led state in the country.

Educators in the past year have had to simultaneously rally for their rights and provide a quality public education for every student who enters into their classroom.

"We should be listening to you, not lecturing to you!" Biden said, drawing a standing ovation. "We should be embracing you, not pushing you aside! You are not the problem!"

Biden quoted another leader — NEA President Dennis Van Roekel — from Van Roekel's keynote address to the

In his introduction, Van Roekel applauded Biden for understanding that "putting Americans back to work is the greatest priority of our nation right now."

"The middle class needs more leaders like Vice President Biden," said Van Roekel. "He knows that the key to economic prosperity for all is a vibrant middle class, and without organized labor, the middle class will not grow and thrive."

The Vice President encouraged educators to work closely with lawmakers and others who genuinely want to improve public education so that all students in America have access to quality public schools.

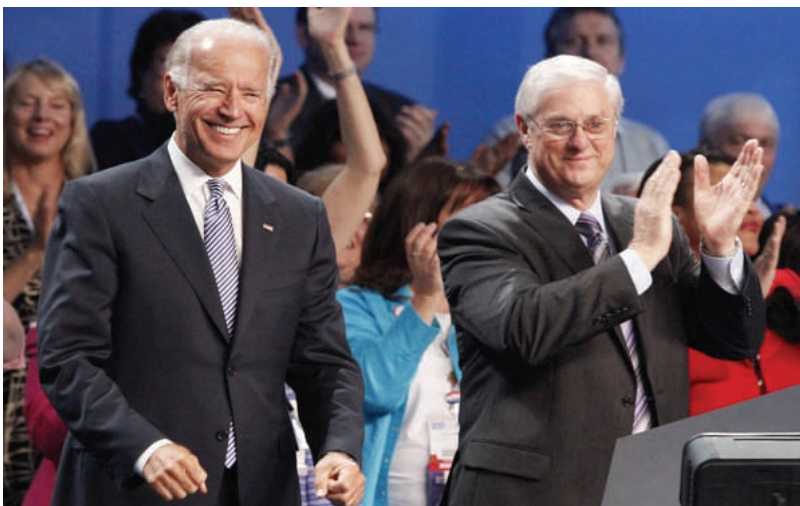
He acknowledged that the Obama Administration and public school educators have at times disagreed

in recent years on the best path forward in school reform, but he added, "not all of it are you wrong about," drawing applause from the delegates.

But, Biden said, the Obama Administration, "stands for education and it stands with labor."

Biden drew laughter and smiles from the audience when he opened by referencing his wife, Dr. Jill Biden, saying, "My name is Joe Biden and I'm in love with an educator! And I'm in love with education!"

Quality public education is an important topic in the Biden household. Dr. Biden is a former high school English teacher and reading specialist. She is an NEA member and currently an education advocate and adjunct professor at a community college in the Washington, D.C., area.



delegates Saturday, in saying that whether we as a society provide what is needed for all children to have a quality education is, "the most fundamental question we need to be asking as a people today."

He said the crux of the fight for public school students, their families and the middle class is, "about social equality, economic opportunity, concentration of wealth, about the belief in the possibility of every child in America."

That includes not only core curriculum classes, but also the arts, athletics, higher education financial aid and pre-kindergarten program funding, he said.

Biden had harsh criticism for corporate interests and the legislators they back who attack those educators, the poor, and the American worker. He called the attacks on public workers and attempts to blame them for budget shortfalls, "one of the biggest scams in modern American history."

# Wisconsin 14 Named NEA 2011 Friend of Education

Delegates to the 2011 NEA RA gave a fired-up, emotional welcome to the 14 Democratic state senators from Wisconsin who stalled Gov. Scott Walker from passing an anti-worker budget bill. The ‘Wisconsin 14’ are NEA’s 2011 Friend of Education Award winners.

Throughout the struggle in Wisconsin, while crowds in the state capitol swelled to as many as 100,000 in protest of Walker’s attack on the middle class, the Wisconsin 14 remained in Illinois for three weeks. They were isolated from the energy of the movement and facing near-constant threat of arrest. But they returned only after the Republican-controlled Senate made a late-night maneuver and passed Walker’s bill.

They got their thanks in person on Saturday, as NEA delegates brought the spirit of the Wisconsin public

workers’ movement into the RA convention hall, holding “Thank You 14” signs, wearing T-shirts bearing their nickname and chanting “Thank you!,”



“We are one!” and “This is what democracy looks like!”

The Wisconsin 14’s stand became a focal point for the workers’ movement not only in Wisconsin, but across the country.

“The courage these senators exhibited during those long, cold weeks in February and March did not go unnoticed,” said NEA President Dennis

Van Roekel. “Those of us who educate America’s children will always be grateful for their friendship, their bravery and their willingness to stand strong for public education and working families.”

Many of the Democratic lawmakers—Tim Carpenter, Spencer Coggs, Tim Cullen, Jon Erpenbach, Dave Hansen, Jim Holperin, Robert Jauch, Chris Larson, Julie Lassa, Fred

Risser, Lena Taylor, Kathleen Vinehout, Robert Wirch and minority leader Mark Miller—took the convention center stage at Chicago’s McCormick Place convention center.



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*Region 64  
Barrington - Lake Zurich*

**We're on the web**

**[WWW.IEANEA.ORG/REGION/64](http://WWW.IEANEA.ORG/REGION/64)**

*Region 64*



The 3 locals that comprise Region 64 are dedicated to delivering the best education possible to the children within our communities.

Region 64 is there to advocate for you at the state level to ensure our educators have the tools they need to provide the best education that every child deserves.

*Join us in advocating for education*



**YOU  
ARE THE  
SECRET WEAPON!**  
*Summer mailer arriving this month in your mailbox*