

*A Basic Right...  
A Great  
Public School  
for Every  
Child.*

LEA President: Arlene Rea  
arlene.rea@nsea.org  
Editor: Dan Studer  
UniServ Director  
dan.studer@nsea.org

A Publication by the  
Lincoln Education  
Association  
4920 Normal Blvd  
Lincoln NE 68506  
489-7500  
www.lincolneducationassociation.org

## **Student Assessment and LB 1157**

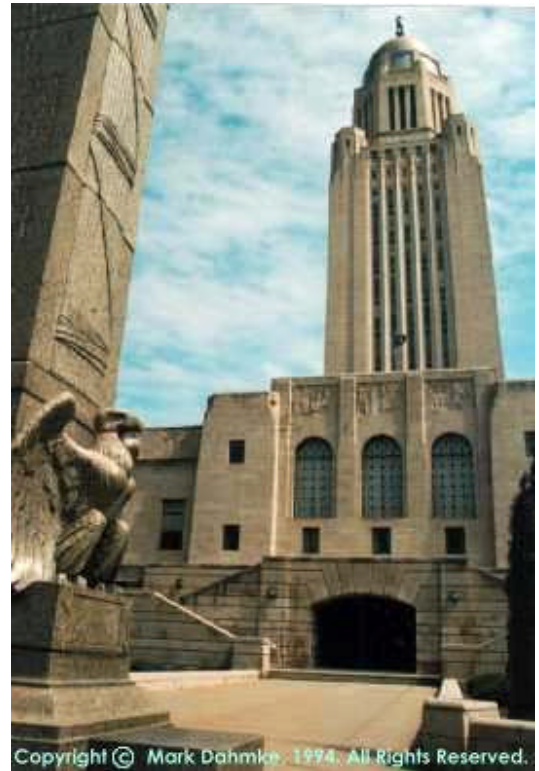
### **What Does It All Mean?**

**Jay Sears**, head of Instructional Advocacy for the NSEA, developed a summary of LB 1157 which has just passed in the Unicameral and what the bill means for NSEA members and teachers in Nebraska Public Schools.

For the record, the NSEA Board of Directors took a position in **opposition** of LB 1157 on January 26, 2008, and NSEA testified against the bill at the hearing on February 26, 2008. There was no stopping this train from rolling down the tracks, however.

For those of you old enough to remember the Sonny & Cher hit with the line, "...and the beat goes on, and the beat goes on..." (or even if you aren't), here is Jay's summary:

- STARS results will no longer be reported for Reading, Math, or Science beginning with Reading in 2009-2010
- State-wide assessments will be developed for Reading and Math in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8 and one grade level in High School
- A state-wide assessment for Science will be developed for one grade in elementary, one grade in middle school/junior high school, and one grade in high school



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- State standards in Reading, Math, and Science at the grade levels assessed are being revised
- The state board will have a committee of Nebraska teachers and administrators to help design the tests
- The Governor will appoint a technical advisory committee of 3 national experts, 1 Nebraska Administrator, and 1 Nebraska Teacher to advise the State Board, Governor, and NDE on the development of the state-wide tests and assessment plan
- The assessments may be criterion referenced and both summative and formative
- Funding will most likely come from the previous STARS grants so teachers will no longer get paid for development of formative assessments unless individual districts continue paying them
- STARS reporting is still required for 2008-2009
- Math reporting could use STARS scores in 2010-2011 if there is not a state-wide test developed for 2010-2011
- The State-wide assessments will have to pass NCLB requirements.



## Urban Myths



Did you know an egg can be cooked by placing it between two activated cell phones?



Did you know that during wartime the eagle's head found on the Presidential Seal is turned to face the opposite direction, toward the arrows and not the olive branch?

*Sorry, these are urban myths.* You can't dial up 1-800-Fry-My-Egg with your cell phones, and although the Presidential Seal has been redesigned a few times over the years, the design is fixed by executive order and is not altered during times of war (contrary to what you may have seen in an episode of *The West Wing*).

*Here is another "urban myth" of which you should be aware:*

The NEA Liability Insurance that covers members is *all inclusive*. Sadly, this is not true.

The Educators Liability Insurance does, among other benefits, allocate *one million dollars* in liability protection per member per occurrence and should a member have to obtain a criminal attorney on their own (NSEA attorneys are provided only in instances where a member's contract or contractual rights are at risk), should the criminal charge be dismissed or the member is found not guilty, the Educators Liability Insurance will *reimburse the member up to \$35,000* for attorney fees per criminal proceeding related to their job.

Although the liability insurance members have is *quite outstanding*, there are exceptions. NSEA recently cautioned that an NSEA member (not an LEA member) found themselves *not* covered by their liability insurance when there was an accident when the member used their own vehicle for a school-sponsored event, which resulted in a student injury accident. The insurance carrier responded to the member with the following:

“Although our policy is broad in scope, there are policy exclusions and we regret to advise that specific policy exclusion applies to this occurrence. That exclusion is for vehicle usage. The policy excludes: the ownership, operation, use, loading or unloading of (a) vehicle of any kind; (b) watercraft; or (c) aircraft. There are three exceptions to this exclusion:

- ◆ a driver training instructor while riding as a passenger in the course of educational employment activities;
- ◆ a vocational educational instructor in the course of regular educational employment activities carried on in a shop provided by the educational unit; and
- ◆ an insured who is supervising students entering or exiting a school bus...”

***Further, both LEA and NSEA always caution members about transporting or giving students rides in the member’s personal vehicle.*** It simply opens the member up to too many possible risks and allegations *in addition to* not being covered by the NEA Liability Insurance. Members are strongly urged to *read and keep* in their personal LEA file their copy of the “Certificate of Insurance” that members receive each August in their bag of materials sent to their home.