

What Does My LEA Membership Get Me When...

A recent event in the Lincoln Public Schools which has gained some media exposure has led members and non-members to inquire: what does LEA membership do for me if I get ticketed in a job-related situation? Although no professional plans or expects to ever find themselves in such a situation, it can and does happen. Should such an unfortunate event occur to a member, this is what their LEA membership provides:

- (1) The member would receive advice and counsel with an LEA professional before meeting with the District.
- (2) The member would receive representation by LEA professional staff at the meeting with the District so the member does not have to go alone and the member's rights are protected. Additionally, the member has with them at the meeting someone with expertise and experience to look over any documentation or paperwork the District might have for the member which the District is also likely to have the member sign.
- (3) Members are provided FREE legal services via our NSEA law firm in regards to their job security and contract with the District. Our NSEA lawyers know school law better than anyone—they wrote many of the laws that are on the books protecting teachers. NSEA provided lawyers will NOT represent any school boards or non-members.
- (4) If a member has to get their own criminal attorney and they are eventually found not guilty of the charges made against them or the case is dismissed, the member's liability insurance pays up to \$35,000 per incident in legal fees.
- (5) If the District takes action against a teacher's contract, the District almost always has to report the case to the State Department of Education and teachers then have to fight to keep their state teaching certificate. The NSEA law firm represents members not only with the District in regards to the teacher's contract, but also represents the member with the Professional Practices Commission if a challenge is made against the member's teaching certificate. This, too, is a free service of membership.
- (6) A member is never left alone to deal with situations which arise such as the one at issue. Members receive advice throughout the process from both the LEA professional staff and their NSEA attorney if an attorney has had to be provided.
- (7) Last, but not least, each member has a one million dollar liability insurance policy (again, per incident) protecting them should parents file law suits against the member.



In all cases, LEA/NSEA/NEA does not judge a member's actions, but the Association is there to be sure a person's rights are protected and that the liability insurance is there when and if it is needed.

None of the above services are or can be provided to non-members. If an individual fails to join the Association when first they are eligible or at the beginning of a school year, and join at a later date when they are faced with some sort of issue, NSEA will not provide legal services to the individual except under exceptional circumstances.

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Thank You, Volunteers!!

Before the actual beginning of the school year there is always a whirlwind of activity at the LEA, getting materials ready for members, preparing for the New Teacher Luncheon, and the annual Faculty Representative (FR) Workshop. Far from being paperless, these events all call for piles of paper and materials to be counted, sorted, organized, and made ready for distribution. To say that LEA could not accomplish this task without help is a gross understatement. Our heart-felt thanks, then, go to our volunteers who are always a phone call away and who so generously give of their time and talents to help LEA prepare for the new year (often for days in a row).

This year we thank:

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for their efforts to get materials prepared.

LEA also thanks the members who attended the New Teacher Luncheon to help answer questions and sign up members among the new LPS hires:

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As always, LEA thanks the *Dynamic Duo Wonder Workers* of the LEA Office: **Teresa Greve** and **Elaine Koch** for having all of the materials ready for the volunteers and everything so well organized to allow our volunteers to get their work done so well!

COPING WITH DIFFICULT PEOPLE: # 2



Last issue in this series to help members cope and deal with difficult people in their lives we told you about **SHERMAN TANKS** who like to roll over people. This issue we look at **SNIPERS**. This article has been revised from information from Robert M. Branson from the homepages of wmich.edu.

SNIPERS differ from **SHERMAN TANKS** in that **SNIPERS** prefer hidden rather than frontal attack; they attack others indirectly, frequently make negative comments about others, and then often try to cover what they have done or said with a laugh or a smile. **Sure! As if!**

Their weapons are innuendoes, sotto voce remarks, not too subtle digs, non-playful teasing, well-placed verbal missiles (high powered enough to hurt), and the attack is often accompanied by nonverbal signals that say: "Pretend that what I'm doing is nice or neutral, or that you don't even hear me."

So how do you cope with SNIPERS?

1. Smoke them out, surface the attack.
2. Provide a peaceful alternative to open warfare.
3. Seek group confirmation or denial of the sniper's criticism.
4. Deal with the underlying problem.
5. Prevent sniping by setting up regular problem-solving meetings.
6. If you are a third-party to the sniping, stay out of the middle, but insist that it stop in front of you.



*The old "duck-and-cover" method will probably not help with a **SNIPER**, but you can always try!*

