



## Session Descriptions

### **Freedom of Speech: Educators Rights and Limits**

Presenters from the Washington University First Amendment Clinic will discuss educators' legal protections and the limits of those protections for off duty speech including social media.

### **Bridging the gap: Cultivating Equitable Relationships Across Cultural Divides**

Dr. Hilario Benzon, NEA Human and Civil Rights, will lead participants in critical self-reflection to increase awareness of their own cultural identities and implicit biases and discuss practical skills and strategies for navigating social and cultural barriers in our classrooms and campuses. The session will include critical conversations about race, power, and privilege. Members will explore the strategies of "calling in" versus "calling out" to address harmful comments or actions in a constructive manner that promotes learning.

### **Creating Brave Spaces: Conversations, Collage, and Collective Action**

Join us for an engaging and creative session designed to open up a brave space for honest dialogue around racial and social justice issues impacting our communities. Together, we'll share experiences, confront challenges, and brainstorm actionable steps toward equity and inclusion. Participants will also take part in an interactive poster-making and collage activity centered around racial and social justice, immigration rights, and collective empowerment, turning reflection into art and advocacy. The session will close with an invitation to continue the journey through our upcoming book club on *Caste* by Isabel Wilkerson, offering another space for growth, learning, and courageous conversation. Come ready to reflect, create, and connect because justice begins with brave dialogue and collective action.

***Note: These sessions will each repeat once.***



## Session Descriptions

### **Parent Perspectives: Supporting Transgender Youth**

This session brings together a panel of parents who are raising transgender children. They will share their lived experiences, challenges, and successes, offering unique insights into navigating healthcare, schools, and community life. Attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the realities families face and learn strategies to foster inclusion, resilience, and support. This session is ideal for educators, service providers, and community members who want to expand their knowledge and better support transgender youth and their families.

### **Libraries as Inclusive Hubs: The Role of Media Specialists in LGBTQ Support**

Library media specialists play a key role in ensuring access to inclusive resources, fostering safe environments, and guiding students toward information that reflects diverse identities and experiences. In this session, specialists will share strategies for curating LGBTQ-affirming collections, addressing challenges in schools and communities, and promoting equity through literature and media. Attendees will leave with practical insights on how libraries can serve as powerful allies for LGBTQ youth and their families.

### **Legal Insights: Protecting LGBTQ Student Rights**

An experienced attorney will provide an overview of the legal landscape impacting LGBTQ students in schools, including protections, challenges, and emerging issues. This session will highlight real-world cases, outline the rights of students under current laws, and explore how schools can proactively foster compliance and inclusion. Attendees will leave with a clearer understanding of the legal responsibilities of educators and institutions, as well as practical strategies to support LGBTQ youth.

### **Activism in Action: Poster-Making for LGBTQ Rights**

This interactive session blends creativity with advocacy. Participants will explore how visual activism is being used in current events and upcoming rallies for LGBTQ rights, then design their own posters to raise awareness and inspire change. This workshop is perfect for those who want to combine art, expression, and activism while leaving with practical tools to use in schools, communities, and beyond.

### **We Teach, We Fight, We Stay: Collective Safety for Queer Educators (external)**

*Guest speaker- Bryan Stanton*

Queer and trans educators are being targeted in classrooms, legislation, and the media—but we are not powerless. This interactive session explores how LGBTQ+ teachers can resist isolation and organize for safety through collective action. Drawing from historical movements like the Lavender Scare, ACT UP, and Indigenous resistance, we'll examine what past struggles teach us about surviving today's fascist resurgence. Participants will engage in real-world scenarios, build digital defense strategies, and explore protest tools like walkouts and teach-ins. This session centers solidarity, strategy, and staying power—for those who refuse to be erased.



## Session Descriptions

### **Empowering Voices: Addressing Challenges for Women and Students in Education**

This session is designed to explore and tackle the unique obstacles faced by women and students within academic environments. Participants will engage in collaborative discussions and develop practical strategies aimed at fostering an inclusive and equitable educational landscape. The primary goal is to empower attendees with the tools necessary to advocate for themselves and others, ultimately creating a more supportive and equitable system for everyone.

### **Women and Economic Insecurity: Understanding Causes, Impacts, and Collective Action**

This session will provide a comprehensive examination of the systemic issues that lead to financial instability for women. Participants will analyze the specific causes and far-reaching effects of economic insecurity, such as the gender wage gap and barriers to career advancement. The session aims to foster dialogue on proactive strategies and collective actions that can be implemented to address these challenges and promote greater financial equity.

***Note: These are 2 hour sessions - They will repeat 3 times.***



## Session Descriptions

### **Empowering Special Education Through Innovative Instructional Tools**

Description: Join us for an engaging and resource-packed session designed to elevate your special education instructional practices! Explore a variety of powerful tools and digital supports that help special education teachers personalize learning, streamline goal writing, and foster student independence. Participants will leave with ready-to-use resources, practical strategies, and a deeper understanding of how to integrate these tools into everyday teaching to better meet the unique needs of all learners.

***Note: This is a 2 hour session – it will be repeated on Saturday.***



## Session Descriptions

### **Empowering Your Voice: Advocacy Opportunities for MNEA-R Members**

Join us to explore the various ways you can make a difference as a retired MNEA member. Learn about MNEA's Political Advocacy Committee (PAC) and how you can contribute your experience and support to active members. Discover opportunities to participate in Capitol Action Days and stay updated on legislative issues through the [mo-nea-legis-update@list.nea.org](mailto:mo-nea-legis-update@list.nea.org) listserv.

#### **Objectives:**

- Understand the role of MNEA's PAC
- Learn how to get involved in advocacy efforts
- Discover ways to stay informed about legislative issues
- Interactive Elements: Group discussion, Q&A session

### **Stay Connected: Mastering Digital Communications as an MNEA-R Member**

Take control of your digital presence and stay connected with MNEA-R! In this session, you'll learn how to update your membership information, subscribe to listservs, and navigate the MNEA-R webpage and Facebook page. Bring your devices and get ready to optimize your digital experience!

#### **Objectives:**

- Update personal membership information
- Subscribe to MNEA-R listservs and Facebook page
- Navigate the MNEA-R webpage and the Regional Webpage
- Interactive Elements: Hands-on activity, digital tour

### **Google for Beginners: Unlocking Gmail, Docs, Drive, and More!**

Get started with Google's essential tools! In this interactive session, you'll learn how to create a Gmail account, use Google Docs for word processing, store files on Google Drive, and manage events on Google Calendar. Bring your devices and get hands-on experience!

#### **Objectives:**

- Create a Gmail account
- Use Google Docs for word processing
- Store files on Google Drive
- Manage events on Google Calendar
- Interactive Elements: Hands-on activity, Q&A session

***MNEA-Retired Session Descriptions continued on the next page.***



## Session Descriptions

### **Inside the Union: Understanding MNEA's Structure and Initiatives**

Dive into the world of MNEA and explore its structure, charitable foundations, and current initiatives. Learn about the Voucher Lawsuit, Redistricting, and Rural Schools. Meet MNEA Foundations Director Phil Murray, and discover how you can get involved!

#### **Objectives:**

- Understand MNEA's structure and initiatives
- Learn about current issues and legislative information

### **Repealing GPO/WEP & the Social Security Fairness Act: What It Means for Missouri Educators**

Learn about the NEA/MNEA victory in repealing GPO/WEP and what it means for you! Get a basic overview of Social Security information, Medicare, and MNEA-R PreRetired Benefits and Opportunities.

#### **Objectives:**

- Understand the impact of the Social Security Fairness Act
- Learn about basic Social Security and Medicare information
- Discover MNEA-R PreRetired Benefits and Opportunities
- Interactive Elements: Presentation, Q&A session

### **Planning for Retirement: Understanding PSRS/PEERS**

Take control of your retirement planning! In this session, you'll learn how to navigate the PSRS/PEERS online portal, designate beneficiaries, estimate service retirement benefits, and understand how life changes impact your membership. Discover MNEA-R PreRetired Benefits and Opportunities!

#### **Objectives:**

- Understand the PSRS/PEERS online portal
- Designate beneficiaries and estimate service retirement benefits
- Learn how life changes impact membership
- Discover MNEA-R PreRetired Benefits and Opportunities



**ASPIRING  
EDUCATORS**

## Session Descriptions

### **Aspiring Educators 101:**

Explore the benefits, resources, and community available through the NEA Aspiring Educators program. Aspiring Educators 101 provides a focused overview of how the AE program supports future teachers, education support professionals, and other aspiring educators as they prepare for their careers.

### **S&#! I wish I would have known:**

A fun and funny overview of all the things we wish we had known before entering our first year in the education world - Complete with how to avoid common pitfalls and misunderstandings that many first year educators experience.

### **Growing Our Own: Inspiring Future Educators Through CTE Pathways:**

Join our two-part session focusing on using CTE and community partnerships to build a grow your own program for future educators. You will be able to identify what resources you will need as well as communication strategies to use in order to get your local prepared for a grow your own program. You will also learn how to sustain the program and measure success metrics as you move through the program.

### **Beyond Homogenous: How to attract and retain a diverse workforce:**

Missouri's teaching workforce is getting less diverse by the year. In this session we will discuss the current reality when it comes to the demographics of Missouri's educators as well as the current trends in recruitment demographics. We will then discuss strategies to promote the recruitment and retention of a more diverse field of educators.

### **The Power of Positive Recruitment: How to move away from the negativity and reframe the profession to encourage people to become educators:**

As Union leaders and activists we are sometimes caught in a culture of negativity when it comes to how we view our profession. In this session we will talk about how we often promote negative myths about the profession that in the wider world of employment aren't actually true. We will talk about these myths and discuss how to promote the positives of our profession because constantly moving people away from it only makes our jobs harder.

***Note: "Growing Our Own" is a 2 hour session.***



## Session Descriptions

### **Recharge & Respond: Self-Care Strategies for ESP Superheroes**

This workshop is designed to equip ESPs with essential tools for prioritizing their well-being in a demanding environment. Participants will learn practical, evidence-based strategies for effectively managing stress and maintaining a healthy work-life balance. The session emphasizes the importance of taking care of their physical and mental health through techniques like mindfulness and establishing healthy boundaries. By implementing these self-care strategies, attendees can stay healthy, rejuvenated, and better equipped to support students.

### **The Power of Positive Recruitment: How to move away from the negativity and reframe ESP professions to encourage people work in public education.**

As Union leaders and activists, we are sometimes caught in a culture of negativity when it comes to how we view our profession. In this session we will talk about how we often promote negative myths about the profession that in the wider world of employment aren't actually true. We will talk about these myths and discuss how to promote the positives of our profession and how to encourage people to join the public education workforce.

### **Rights, Roles, and Responsibilities: What Every Educator Should Know**

This workshop provides public education employees with essential knowledge about their legal rights and responsibilities in the workplace. Participants will explore key issues related to free speech, social media use, and proper documentation practices. The session will also cover best practices for navigating interactions with administrators, parents, and outside agencies. Attendees will leave with practical strategies to protect themselves professionally while maintaining effective communication and compliance within their school communities.

### **Navigating the Union:**

Education Support Professionals play vital roles inside and outside the classroom. MNEA and NEA offer a multitude of opportunities, trainings, benefits, and professional development for ESP members. This session will explore these programs and how to navigate the union structure and departments to maximize your membership.

### **S&#! I wish I would have known:**

A fun and funny overview of all the things you wish you had known before entering the education world. Participants will discuss how to avoid common pitfalls and misunderstandings and best practices for surviving and thriving in our public schools that many first year educators experience.

***Note: The "Rights/Roles/Responsibilities" session will repeat once.***