



Ski Country EduCator

March – April 2009

Ski Country UniServ Approaching 1,200 Members

As of March 1st Ski Country UniServ had 1,195 members which is only 5 away from our goal of 1,200. The SCUU Unit Council approved \$800 to go to the Ski Country local that recruits and signs the 1,200th member. This offer is good until April 1st. In April and May we will be offering our early enrollment program to non-members who agree to become full members for the 2009-2010 membership year.

The incentive for a potential member to “early enroll” in our Association is the use of the NEA Liability Insurance and six NEA Member Benefits Programs from April 1 through August 31st, 2009. Then in August and September of 2009 they must agree to become full members of the Association. This incentive is only available to potential members who are joining the Association as First Time Active Members. Individuals who were previously members in Colorado or in any other state are NOT eligible to join under this incentive program.

The six NEA Member Benefits programs are: NEA A+ Auto and Homeowners Insurance, Credit Card Programs, Magazine Subscription Program, Rental Car Plan, Accidental Death and Dismemberment Insurance, and Group Term Life Insurance.

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Ski Country Members Attending Trainings and Conferences

Our Ski Country members are out there attending conferences and workshops available to all members of our Association.

January 19th **Todd Huck** and **Tanya Caruso** of the **Eagle County Education Association** attended our CEA Legislative Liaison Training in Denver. They both visited with Representative Christine Scanlan and Senator Al White on that day and learned about the legislative process and how to keep in touch with our Ski Country Legislators.

January 15th through the 17th **Julie and Brett Sperl** of the **Moffat County Education Association** attended the NEA Regional Leadership Conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Julie and Brett reported that it was an honor to represent MCEA and Ski Country as part of the CEA Delegation. Julie's report included... "We look forward to moving ahead and helping lead Moffat County Education Association toward positive change. In the words of NEA President Dennis Van Roekel, "What can you do without permission? Proceed until apprehended!"

March 13th through 15th **Maureen Barnes** of the **Lake County Education Association** will attend the NEA National ESP conference in Orlando Florida. Maureen is a Special Education Para-Professional in Lake County.

For our ESP members that may be interested CEA is hosting its second annual ESP Conference and Training in Denver on the 11th of April. If you are interested contact your local president or the Ski Country office for details.

Amazing Ski Country Members

Cassie Harrelson of the **Eagle County Education Association** organized the CDE and CEA Teacher Tour held in Eagle on March 5th.

The Colorado Department of Education in collaboration with the Colorado Education Association (CEA) held a series of tours across the state to identify teacher understanding of Senate Bill 08-212, also known as the Colorado Achievement Plan for Kids (CAP4K). The tour stops allowed for discussion about the law's relevance to practice, its impact on teaching and learning and the kind of help that teachers would find useful for classroom implementation.

The presentation by John Condie of CDE was informative and well received. Thanks to Cassie for your hard work in organizing this event.

Ski Country UniServ Director Dennis Carlson visited Basalt Elementary on March 2nd to read to one of the second grade classes in honor of the NEA’s “Dr. Seuss - Read Across America” program. **Megan Talbott** of the **Roaring Fork Community Education Association** organizes the event every year and this year invited over 40 readers from the surrounding area to read one of their favorite books to the students of Basalt Elementary.

Beth Flaherty and **Laura Graf-Ryer** of the **Summit County Education Association** arranged for and accompanied a group of high school students from Summit County High School to attend the Presidential Inauguration of Barack Obama on January 20th. Beth said upon her return how wonderful it was to witness a part of history in person and to experience the excitement of her students in being present at this once in a lifetime event.

President’s Stimulus Package to Provide Additional Education Funding to Ski Country School Districts

The recently passed Economy Stimulus and Recovery Package passed by both houses of the United States Congress and signed into law by President Barack Obama will provide much needed funding for Title 1 programs and Special Education Programs in school districts in Ski Country UniServ. Below is a list of school districts in Ski Country UniServ and the amount of money they will receive from the Stimulus Package.

Aspen	\$164,000
Eagle County.....	\$1,211,000
Roaring Fork.....	\$1,429,000
East Grand.....	\$310,000
Hayden.....	\$111,000
West Grand.....	\$141,000
Lake County.....	\$449,000
Moffat County.....	\$600,000
South Routt.....	\$105,000
Steamboat Springs	\$410,000
Summit County.....	\$565,000
North Park – Jackson County.....	\$80,000

It is my understanding that this money is one time funding that will help districts fund the Title 1 and Special Education IDEA Part B programs. One of the ways this could help districts is to free up money in their general fund budgets that would possibly have gone to supplement these programs required by the federal government. I anticipate that local school boards will have say in how this money is distributed in each district. There is a possibility that this money could be helpful in alleviating budget cuts expected because of the State of Colorado’s budget deficits. Stay tuned for further information about the Stimulus money.

- Dennis Carlson, Ski Country UniServ

Colorado Teaching & Learning Conditions Survey: Coming soon to a computer near you

This spring Colorado K-12 teachers will finally have the opportunity to complete an online survey that will provide important information to policy makers at the state and district levels. The Colorado Teaching & Learning Survey will be offered in late April-May to all teachers as a result of CEA's continued efforts to get funding for the survey.

We have been working to get funding for the survey for several years because we know how important it is to listen to and understand teachers' perceptions of their teaching conditions, as these conditions directly influence student learning. We believe, based on other states' experiences, that the feedback from this survey will help shape education policy, improve the quality of instruction for our students, and help us work toward school improvement in every district.

The survey has already accomplished these goals. Since Mike Easley, North Carolina governor, initiated the Teaching & Learning Conditions Survey in his state in 2004, other states have jumped on the tool because of the results it yields: Massachusetts, Kansas, Illinois, West Virginia, Maine, and Alabama.

HB 08-1384, passed by the Legislature last year, authorized the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to conduct this survey and appropriated \$100,000 for it. NEA contributed \$25,000 and CEA has committed staff time and resources to making sure the survey happens this spring. The [New Teacher Center](#) will oversee the survey.

The survey, which includes core questions that reflect Colorado's K-12 education system, will be online and accessed by all licensed teachers through individual codes distributed to them. It is anonymous, but will produce information unique to each school if a large enough group of teachers takes the survey in that school.

CDE staff, CEA leaders and staff, and others anxious to bring the survey to Colorado are working right now on the specifics of the survey process. As soon as we have more information, we will inform you of the process our Association will use to ensure that you have the opportunity to take the survey.

"Life is not a spectacle or a feast; it is a predicament." - George Santayana

