

IEA Awesome Podcast

Episode 7 – Professional Development Opportunities

- 00:01 Music starts
- 00:05 *Kelsey:* Welcome to the Awesome IEA Podcast brought to you by the Illinois Education Association.
- 00:11 *Diana:* The podcast for curious, well-informed Association members.
- 00:15 *Kelsey:* I am one of your hosts, Kelsey Harms, a Computer Specialist from the IEA Program Development Department.
- 00:25 And, I'm Diana Zaleksi, one of your Instructional and Professional Development Directors from IEA Teaching and Learning.
- 00:29 The goal of this podcast is to educate our members about important new educational policy initiatives in a brief and, hopefully, entertaining format.
- 00:38 Today, we're going to discuss IEA professional development opportunities with our special guest, Mary Jane Morris, Director of IEA Teaching and Learning.
- Mary Jane, thanks so much for being with us today.
- 00:50 *Mary Jane:* It is my pleasure. Thank you for having me.
- 00:55 *Diana:* So, can you tell us what the mission of IEA Teaching and Learning is?
- 00:59 *Mary Jane:* Yes, IEA Teaching and Learning supports the IEA mission which is to effect excellence and equity in public education, and to be the advocacy organization for all public education employees.
- 01:14 Within Teaching and Learning, we believe that educators provide a stable, nurturing, and inspiring environment that makes it possible to teach each student and provide individual attention to each student's learning needs.
- 01:25 To this end, we work to make sure that every student has a qualified and caring educator. And within Teaching and Learning, we support the IEA staff, members, and local associations by providing professional development opportunities to improve teaching and learning. So, we're here to support educators, along with our staff.
- 01:45 *Kelsey:* That's fantastic. Mary Jane, I've heard a lot about IEA's Online Learning Portal. Can you tell us what the IEA Learning Portal is, and how members can access it?
- 01:54 *Mary Jane:* Yes, the IEA Online Learning Portal is an opportunity for members to receive free online learning courses. And, members can access it by going to the IEA website, they're going to scroll down to about the middle of the page, and they will see Online Learning Portal.

- 02:13 If they click there, it will take them to the Members Only page where they can register or log in. And, if they're already a member they just log in and they can begin accessing courses.
- 02:24 If they have any problems whatsoever, they can connect with the IEA Connect Specialist, which is a chat box at the bottom of the page and they will be there to help them with any problems that they might have.
- 02:36 We have a great opportunity for members. We have over 250 plus courses and we're always adding new courses.
- 02:44 *Diana:* Wow, the Online Learning Portal really sounds like a great benefit to our members. Can you tell us about a few specific examples of courses our members might find on the Online Learning Portal?
- 02:53 *Mary Jane:* Underneath Education Policy, there is an ESSA, Every Student Succeeds Act. And we also have some leadership courses, we have some presidents' trainings, treasurer trainings. And, if you're a building advocate, some training to understand what that actually means and what are the roles of a building advocate.
- 03:14 We have some trainings on legal. And, there's a lot of courses on technology in the classroom. And then there's also for those individuals that might need some support, we have a Degrees Not Debt course. And, we have several on classroom management, ACES, with is Adverse Childhood Experiences, and just a variety of other topics that fit into the curriculum category, such as global education, diversity, just helping teachers in the classroom in a variety of topics.
- 3:43 And, if a teacher sees something that may not be there, they can also offer or ask for a course to be added. We're always looking for ideas from our educators. And there's also some courses for higher ed and ESPs, so just a variety of topics.
- 04:00 *Kelsey:* So, if a member does have an idea for a course for the Online Learning Portal, who would they reach out to contact?
- 04:07 *Mary Jane:* They can reach out to any of us. Diana, I'm sure you would take a call, or Kelsey, or myself. And, IEA Teaching and Learning staff are another opportunity to them to reach out. Many of our professional staff are out in the field and they would also assist them, if needed.
- 04:22 *Diana:* Great. So, how do we notify members of those new courses on the Online Learning Portal?
- 04:28 New courses are featured under Members Only and they will be able to view those new courses through a demo that's there. They will also be able to see the courses through, we have a course catalog that's coming out twice a year and those will be featuring new courses that are new and upcoming for our members to access.
- 04:48 *Kelsey:* That's fantastic. Mary Jane, we have online learning opportunities. What about in-person training opportunities?

- 04:55 *Mary Jane:* Yes, so there is an opportunity to request a training and they can do that from our website. If they go under, on the main page, Teaching and Learning, there is a form called the Professional Development Request that is midway down the page. They can click on that link and it will provide them with some information. They could type in their request and it will go to the appropriate person.
- 05:19 Members can request training through Legal, through curriculum, through professional development through our Teaching and Learning, through Computer Services, and then also, through Communications.
- 05:31 *Kelsey:* I know IEA had been doing a lot of trauma-informed schools and restorative practices work. Can you talk about the training opportunities for members around these topics specifically?
- 05:42 *Mary Jane:* Yes, IEA has been very busy with the trauma-informed practices and we have a variety of resources for our members. Some of them are online and some of them they can request.
- 05:53 On our homepage, if they go under trauma-informed practices, they can see some activities like, Know Me, Know My Name, which is a program that is cost free and it's really there to help educators to identify and make contact with children. It's a great activity for a school or a district.
- 06:13 They could also access *Paper Tigers*. We have *Paper Tigers*, it is a documentary that is an intimate look into the lives of selected students attending alternative schools. The film actually examines the inspiring promise of trauma-informed communities. And, that would be, they could access that through their regional office and have that viewing for them.
- 06:37 We also have another documentary as well and that's *Resilience*, where they can also access that documentary for their members. The Partnership for Resilience is a great partnership for us, too. And, through them, there are many trainings. And, through our Teaching and Learning staff, we have opportunities to actually provide training on SEL and restorative practices. And, also just a more trauma-informed workshop as well to help teachers and administrators understand the importance of being a trauma informed school.
- 07:14 *Diana:* That's great. I know that we also proactively schedule trainings for our members throughout the year. Where can our members find these opportunities posted?
- 07:24 *Mary Jane:* Yes, we do, and if they go to the main website, and go under events, they can click on the IEA calendar, the professional development is listed there. Or, they could also contact, or go into Teaching and Learning and we have a professional development calendar that also has all the events as well. So, there is two opportunities for them to actually learn more about what IEA is doing around professional development.
- 07:49 *Kelsey:* Mary Jane, can members request training for their local association?

- 07:53 *Mary Jane:* Yes, and it's similar to asking for a member training. They would go the IEA website and under Teaching and Learning and go down to the special development request. That request is for members and for local associations. And, we would make sure it got to the right person depending on the topic.
- 08:13 *Diana:* That's great. Thank you so much, Mary Jane. If you have any questions, comments, or feedback, please check out the contact section on the podcast page on the IEA website.
- 08:24 *Kelsey:* We will also post some helpful links about professional development in the show notes section on the podcast.
- 08:31 *Diana:* Thanks so much for being a member and thank you for joining us.
- 08:39 End