

Awesome IEA Podcast

Episode 15 – The 2019 IEA Representative Assembly

- 00:01 *Kelsey*: Welcome to the Awesome IEA Podcast brought to you by the Illinois Education Association.
- 00:05 *Diana*: The podcast for curious well-informed association members.
- 00:08 *Kelsey*: I'm one of your hosts, Kelsey Harms, a Computer Specialist from the IEA Program Development Department.
- 00:13 *Diana*: And I'm Diana Zaleski, one of your Instructional Resource and Professional Development Directors from IEA Teaching and Learning.
- 00:19 *Kelsey*: The goal of this podcast is to educate our members about important new educational policy initiatives in a brief and hopefully entertaining format.
- 00:27 *Diana*: Today we are going to discuss the 2019 IEA Representative Assembly with two special guests. First up is Robin Ehrhart, IEA Director of Program Development. Robin, thank you so much for being with us today.
- 00:38 *Robin*: Well, thanks to both of you for having me back.
- 0:40 *Kelsey*: Last year on the podcast we covered how the IEA Representative Assembly, or RA, works and will link to that podcast in the show notes section on the podcast page for this episode. Can you start off by letting us know when and where this year's Representative Assembly, or RA, is being held?
- 00:56 *Robin*: Certainly, Kelsey. So, this year we're going to be having the RA at the same location as last year. We're going to be in the Grand Ballroom at the Hyatt Regency O'Hare. And, the RA is going to convene on April 11 at 9 a.m.
- 01:07 *Diana*: How many delegates are we expecting this year? And, can you give us a quick reminder of what happens at the RA?
- 01:13 *Robin*: So, this year, again we are expecting over twelve hundred delegates. And, the delegates are going to come together to deliberate and vote on IEA policy. They are going to be looking at rules that govern the organization and introducing and voting on new business items.
- 01:26 *Kelsey*: I know we are working very hard on going "green". Can you tell us more about the RA Green Delegates and what to expect?
- 01:32 *Robin*: So, this year we're going to try something a little bit different. We're going to be surveying all of our delegates in order to get their preferences on going green. And, then we are going to do our best in order to try and limit the amount of paper that delegate who opted to go green will be receiving. Now, there will be some documents that all delegates will receive in paper but we're going to try to greatly reduce the amount of paper that is distributed there.
- 01:54 So, one of things that we're going to be asking is for all of our delegates to only hook only one device onto the Wi-Fi at the hotel in the ballroom. So, with that, we're going to be asking

delegates to not be streaming any videos, no streaming of music, and then only accessing the Wi-Fi that they really need in order to make sure that we have bandwidth available for our Green Delegates so they can download the documents they need for RA business.

- 02:19 *Diana*: Now, I know the RA officially begins Thursday afternoon, but are there any pre-events happening on Wednesday, April 10, that our delegates need to know about?
- 02:28 *Robin*: So, we have a few things that are going to be happening on the tenth. Our registration is going to open the tenth at four o'clock. And, then we also have a presidents' reception for all of our local presidents that's going to run from 6-8 p.m. and that's going to be held at the Red Bar onsite at the Hyatt O'Hare. And, then we are also going to be having a board meeting starting at 8 p.m. that evening.
- 02:46 *Kelsey*: Robin, I know typically delegates need to have their badges for any receptions. Is that going to be true for the local presidents' reception as well?
- 02:54 *Robin*: That's going to be true for all receptions we are hosting this year.
- 02:57 *Kelsey*: So, it's going to be super important that local presidents get there and take advantage of that registration starting at 4 p.m.
- 03:02 *Robin*: Absolutely.
- 03:03 *Kelsey*: I know our pre-event schedule for Thursday has changed slightly. In prior years we have had a keynote address Thursday morning at nine. What's the plan for this year?
- 03:11 *Robin*: Thursday morning is going to start off a little differently. We're still going to have registration that starts around 8 a.m. and the information desk will be starting at that same time. Our exhibit area will still open at 8:30 but what will be a little different is at 9 a.m., instead of having a keynote slot this year, we're going to be having an all delegate budget hearing that is going to run from nine to ten.
- 03:31 Once this is over, all of the delegates will be able to attend two separate sessions where they can either attend an open hearing or PD session. This year we're very excited because we have about sixty offerings for our delegates to attend and can choose among open hearings or PD sessions.
- 03:48 *Kelsey*: Speaking of, Diana, I know that you are the staff contact for the Special Education Committee. Will they be hosting an open hearing? And, if so, can you walk us through what to expect?
- 03:56 *Diana*: Yes, they certainly will be hosting an open hearing as well as a PD session. During the open hearing, all members of the Special Education Committee, or those who at least can attend the RA, will be there. And, they'll be discussing all of the work they've been doing throughout the year. So, it's a great opportunity for members who are interested in issues around special education to come, talk to those committee members, hear about the work they've been doing throughout the year, and then ask questions and talk about resources they need. And, it's the job of that Special Education Committee to put those resources together.

- 04:31 So, this year, one of the main topics they'll be talking about is resources for special educators around disciplining students with disabilities because we heard the need for a lot of resources around that topic especially related to the implementation of Senate Bill 100 throughout the state.
- 04:47 Now, along with that information that members will receive at that open hearing, we're also going to have a focused PD session on the implementation of Senate Bill 100 for special educators. So, we hope that we will have a lot of members coming. Please bring your questions and concerns and we will do our best to make sure you have the resources that you need.
- 05:09 *Kelsey*: Fantastic. The Representative Assembly officially begins Thursday afternoon. Robin, can you share with us any information you have about lounges, receptions, and entertainment?
- 05:18 *Robin*: Certainly. So, we're having all three of those things, different dates, different times. As far as the lounges go, we're going to have a presidents' lounge open from Wednesday afternoon to Thursday afternoon and that's going to be held in Rosemont D. Then, the presidents' lounge is going to reopen on Friday but they are going to reopen in McCarran A/B for Friday.
- 05:37 We also have an ESP Resource Room that's going to be open Wednesday through Friday and that's going to be located in LAX B. As we've already mentioned, the presidents will have a reception in the Red Bar Wednesday evening from 6-8 p.m. The ESP reception is going to be Friday evening from 6-8 p.m. in the Red Bar. And, the Early Career Educator reception is going to be on Friday from 6-7:30 and that one is going to be located in the Midway Room at the hotel.
- 06:04 *Kelsey*: Robin, about that Early Career Educator reception, can you help us understand who is an early career educator?
- 06:10 *Robin*: Yes, Kelsey, so our Early Career Educator reception will be for anyone who is within their first ten years of employment in the education field. And, remember, don't forget your badges because those will be scanned for admission to all of these receptions.
- 06:24 We're also going to be having entertainment on Friday evening from 8-11:30 p.m. We're having a DJ back, no karaoke this year, just a DJ. We're also going to be having some student groups who will be performing before some of the business sessions this year.
- 06:38 *Diana*: I love that our members have a chance to network with others while they are at the RA. What else can we expect to happen at this year's Representative Assembly?
- 06:46 *Robin*: This year, delegates can expect to hear a budget proposal and vote on the two-year budget, they're going to be hearing from the legislative platform committee about updates to the legislative platform. They're going to be submitting, debating, and voting on any new business items, as well as voting for other elected positions, which that's going to happen on Saturday morning.
- 07:02 *Kelsey*: Excellent. I know this year rather than having a keynote presentation we are having several featured speakers. Sarah Antonacci, IEA Director of Communications, has stopped by to give us an idea of what to expect from this year's featured speakers.

- 07:16 *Sarah*: Well, thank you Kelsey and Diana. We're really excited. One of our featured speakers is the main figure in the Red for Ed movement in Arizona. It all started with a retweet. The Arizona Education Association president Joe Thomas retweeted something from West Virginia and he engaged with two members from his own Association and it started a movement that just grew very quickly, literally overnight and ended up being, sort of, spearheaded by a twenty-three-year-old music teacher in Arizona named Noah Karvelis and he's going to come and become one of our guest speakers. He's actually originally from Pecatonica, Illinois, right outside of Rockford.
- 07:52 He was really disappointed in the way that public education was being funded in Arizona and really wanted to see change. And, so he organized other members and it grew into a giant movement. Literally overnight, he started a Facebook page and had 60,000 followers. And, the Arizona Education Association saw this growth and let it be member lead and staff supported and helped in any way that they could. So, he's going to come and tell us about how that movement was born and where they are today. He'll be featured on Friday.
- 08:25 And, we'll also put a spotlight on our own Geneva Education Association. They had a successful strike late in 2018 and leaders from there will share the ways that they engaged and communicated with their community. As well as, the approach they used to communicate with the community as well as their members by being positive and professional and making sure folks knew the what, and the why, and the how regarding all the steps that they were taking.
- 08:48 And, we'll also be making a special effort to feature several speakers that will help further our understanding of restorative justice, and resilience, and understanding SB 100, including a representative of Communities United which is an organization that pairs youth and adults to solve important issues including ways to help schools recognize a student as a full person, rather than just a disciplinary problem.
- 09:12 We'll also feature Jason Leahy from the Illinois Principals Association and several of our own educators who will share their personal stories. When we let people tell their own stories there's really nothing that's more powerful so we're really looking forward to it. Thank you for letting us take a chance to preview it here.
- 09:26 *Diana*: Well, our featured speakers' line up sounds fantastic. I'm really looking forward to it. Thanks so much for dropping by and sharing this important information.
- 09:35 *Kelsey*: Robin, is there anything else you would like our members to know, or any tips you would like to share with first time delegates?
- 09:40 *Robin*: Well, there's probably a few more things folks might want to know. I would recommend that everyone bring some sort of sweater or jacket because sometimes those meeting rooms have a tendency to be a little bit cooler.
- 09:49 I'd also ask as we are making more of an effort to go green, that you need to be sure you bring your charging cords, power adapters, or any portable charging devices that you might have. We will be having a charging station like we did before outside of registration. But, we're also this year looking in to see if we can have some power cords on the side of the ballroom if someone has a laptop and they want to step over a charge the laptop while they're there. And, just a

reminder, we will be asking delegate to connect one, and only one, device to Wi-Fi during the RA.

- 10:21 *Diana*: Those are extremely helpful tips. Thanks to Sarah Antonacci for joining us on the podcast today, and to you Robin for coming back on our podcast again. If you have any questions, comments, or feedback, please check out the contact section on the podcast page on the IEA Website.
- 10:36 *Kelsey*: Thanks to Mark for the audio help, Amanda for the transcription, and Dan for the website. As always, thanks so much for being a member, and thanks for joining us!
- 10:43 End