

IEA Awesome Podcast Episode 26 – IEA RA

- 00:00 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.
- 00:09 KELSEY: I'm one of your hosts, Kelsey Harms, a Computer Specialist from the IEA Program Development Department.
- 00:14 DIANA: And I'm Diana Zaleski, one of your Instructional Resource and Professional Development Directors from IEA Teaching and Learning.
- 00:21 KELSEY: The goal of this podcast is to educate our members about important new educational policy initiatives in a brief and hopefully entertaining format.
- 00:28 DIANA: Today we are going to discuss the 2020 IEA Representative Assembly with Robin Ehrhart, IEA Director of Program Development. Robin, thank you so much for being with us today!
- 00:39 ROBIN: Thank you, Kelsey and Diana for the invitation. It's always great to join you guys.
- 00:42 KELSEY: Robin, welcome back to the podcast. It is so hard to believe but we are headed into Representative Assembly quickly this year. Can you tell us when and where the Representative Assembly, or RA, will be held this year?
- 00:55 ROBIN: Absolutely! So, you're correct. The RA is going to be early this year. It's going to be held on March 5th through the 7th and we're returning again to the Hyatt Regency O'hare in Rosemont.
- 01:05 DIANA: How many delegates are we expecting this year? And, can you give us a quick reminder of what happens each year at the RA?
- 01:11 ROBIN: So, this year we're expecting about twelve hundred delegates and this is always the meeting during the year that's really a democratic process where our delegates come together to deliberate and vote on IEA policy, they debate on new business items, they discuss governing rules. It's really a good event that brings a lot of input from our members and gives a lot of direction to IEA.
- 01:33 KELSEY: Robin, I know we're working very hard on going green. Can you tell us about the RA green delegates and what they should expect?
- 01:39 ROBIN: Any delegates that wanted to sign up to be a green delegate could do so through a survey that we had. And, we've worked with the A/V company onsite this year who have actually made some improvements to the infrastructure there at the ballroom that we're going to be using at the hotel. So, we expect that our delegates should have a better experience getting their documents.

- 01:56 Just like last year, we're asking our green delegates to connect just one device to the WIFI infrastructure there in the ballroom at the hotel because we do have a limited bandwidth that has to cover all twelve hundred of those delegates.
- 02:09 All of our delegates again this year who have signed up to be green delegates can access the electronic drop box where they can download all of the documents that are relative to the RA. And, we still do have some people that want to receive paper copies and they can still do that if that's their method of choice.
- 02:25 DIANA: I know the RA officially begins Thursday afternoon. But, are there any pre-events happening on Wednesday, March 4th?
- 02:33 ROBIN: We're going to have registration opening again on Wednesday at 4 p.m. at the hotel. There's going to be a local presidents reception held at the Red Bar that night from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. And, then we also have an IEA Board of Directors meeting that night at 8:00 p.m.
- 02:47 KELSEY: I know our pre-event schedule for Thursday has changed slightly. In prior years, we've had a keynote address Thursday morning at nine. Can you share with us what the plan is for this year?
- 02:57 ROBIN: Thursday morning, we're also going to have registration opening again at 8:00 a.m., and that will be outside the Grand Ballroom like we normally have. Our exhibit areas are going to opening at 8:30 a.m. We have quite a few exhibitors again this year. We're going to have in the exhibit area as well, IEA Foundation raffle baskets and the NEA PAC Fund is going to be set up there as well. So, be sure to go out and visit all the exhibitors when you're there.
- 03:20 And, then at 9:00 o'clock, we're going to have a couple of our members who are going to join us for a panel discussion and they're going to be sharing with us about how they've been engaging in their school board elections and their local referendums. This should actually be a very interesting conversation as it's really going to highlight some of our local efforts and the work that some of our members are doing.
- 03:40 Then following this panel discussion from ten to eleven and again from 11:15 to 12:15, we're going to be having some breakout sessions where our delegates can attend either some open hearings, some professional development sessions, or they can actually attend a session that we have where they can come and get assistance if they need help crafting a new business item, maybe some proposed resolutions, or proposed changes to the Legislative Platform, those will be set up during those times as well.
- 04:06 And, during both of these time slots the offerings for these open hearings and professional development sessions, we're having roughly thirty choices in each of those time slots for our delegates to choose from. So, there's going to be a wide selection for our delegates to actually attend.
- 04:22 KELSEY: That sounds fantastic. I know the Representative Assembly officially begins Thursday afternoon. Robin, can you share any information you have about the afterhours lounges, receptions, and entertainment that our delegates can engage in?

- 04:36 ROBIN: Absolutely. So, again, we will be having an ESP resource room, and the hours on this are going to vary depending on the day, but the resource room for the ESPs will be open Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and certain hours on Saturday. This is going to be housed in the JFK room on the lobby level. Our presidents lounge is going to be returning again this year from Wednesday afternoon to Thursday afternoon and then they'll be again Friday most of the day into the early afternoon. The presidents lounge this time is going to be located in the North Central Room on the entry level.
- 05:07 In terms of receptions, we've already mentioned local presidents' reception on Wednesday night from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. We are also going to be having an ESP reception to be in the Red Bar at the hotel and it's going to be 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. on Friday evening. We also are going to have the annual awards reception. It's going to be on Thursday night from 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. in one of the Rosemont rooms.
- 05:32 Now in terms of entertainment, we have this year five groups of student performers that are going to be joining us at the RA. We're very excited because we actually filled everyone of our student performers slots so we should have a great selection of some of the best skills that our students have out there.
- 05:50 We're going to be having a movie night that's going to be on Friday night. We are going to be screening the movie *The Long Shadow*. And, this is going to be from 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. on Friday. And then following later on Friday evening starting at 8:30 p.m., we're going to be having a DJ and karaoke there at the hotel.
- 06:06 KELSEY: Robin, I know it's super important that our delegates have their credentials with them at all times. Do they need their credentials to attend these various events that you just talked about?
- 06:03 ROBIN: Yes, Kelsey. Our IEA delegates will need their credentials anytime they are attending an RA sponsored event. That includes the receptions, movie nights, any of the open hearings or PD sessions and then of course the main business sessions in the large ballroom.
- 06:31 DIANA: So, what else can we expect to happen at this year's Representative Assembly?
- 06:35 ROBIN: One of the things that will be a little different is that our elections this time were all uncontested races so we will not be having the main elections out on Saturday morning like we typically would in a normal year at the RA. We will have the same types of debates and discussions over new business items, Legislative Platform amendments, resolutions, bylaws amendments, all of those things.
- 06:57 So again, all of our delegates will have an opportunity while they're attending the RA to take part in all of the deliberations and discussions that happen on the floor that help direct the IEA policy and business.
- 07:08 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?
- 07:14 ROBIN: I would just remind all of our delegates when they come to the RA to come prepared, have fun. Be sure you bring a sweater, water bottle, charging cords, power adapters. We're

going to be setting up some charging stations in the main ballroom this year on the sides so that delegates don't have to leave the floor if they have to charge anything.

- 07:32 And just reminder, for all of our delegates that we're going to be asking our folks to connect only one device to the WIFI system and any given time. We'll also have out in the exhibit area a step and repeat photo booth so we have a few little props out there that our delegates can part of and share some selfies and shots with their friends.
- 07:50 DIANA: Thank you so much for joining us, Robin. If you have any questions, comments, or feedback, please check out the contact section on the podcast page on the IEA Website.
- 07:58 KELSEY: Special thanks to Mark for the audio help, Amanda for the transcription, and Dan for the website. As always, thank you so much for being a member, and thanks for joining us!
- 08:08 End