

# SPRINGFIELD EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

# SEAF ACTION LINE

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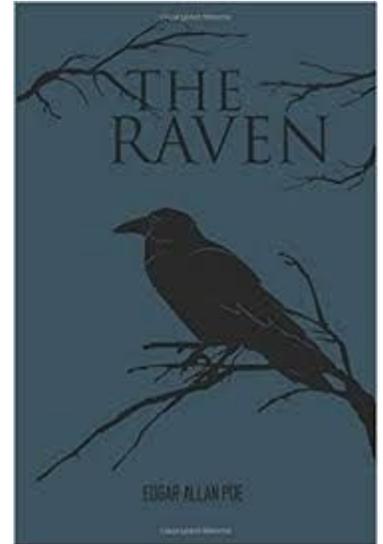
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## The Choice Is Yours...

In 1989, 30 years ago, the movie “Dead Poet’s Society” was released. In this teaching movie classic, a new English teacher, John Keating (Robin Williams), is introduced to an all-boys preparatory school that is known for its ancient traditions and high standards. He uses unorthodox methods to reach out to his students, who face enormous pressures from their parents and the school. With Keating's help, students and others learn to break out of their shells, pursue their dreams and seize the day. This movie was inspirational to scores of future educators and helped one to envision the type of positive impact that could be made on student’s lives.

Thirty years later, this movie has every bit as much relevance as it ever did. The most famous quote in *Dead Poets Society* is “carpe diem,” which means “seize the day” in Latin. Professor John Keating delivers these words to his students on the first day of school at Welton Academy, symbolizing his unorthodox approach to education and his desire to inspire his students to “make their lives extraordinary.” Their teacher, Keating, is critical of blind obedience and conformity practiced by most teachers at Welton Academy (the “Welton way”) and encourages students to think for themselves (the “Keating way”). Sameness and repetition become the real villains of *Dead Poets Society* and we are led to understand the roots of conformity and why it has the potential to be so dangerous.

We, as union members and educational professionals, are caught in this paradox daily. We are the midwest John Keatings and we have to decide how we impact children and what stance we take on the systemic process of our own public education system. Do we do what accept the current norms of society? Do we close our doors and focus on our little piece of the pie? Do we become a part of the problem or are we the next puzzle piece in the solution. The choice is yours...



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## Top Shelf Teachers

Congratulations to the finalists for the 2019 Horace Mann Educator of the Year. The 2019 finalists are Abbey Dirksen, Southeast High School; Sherry Frachey, Iles School; Dan Hartman, Dubois Elementary; Christie Jones, Lincoln Magnet School, and Sharon Jones, Hazel Dell Elementary. We are honored to be considered your colleagues.



## Alternative Education Committee

Classically, a portion of the Union President's job has been to sit in on the bimonthly school board meetings. In doing so, I have had some realizations. One, hardly anyone from the public is ever there. Two, much of the business there is done in closed session. And three, the only reason an SEA member would be in attendance is if we are specifically invited. I, for one, would like to change all three.

According to contract section 4.10 MEETINGS, Association Recognition at Board Meetings, "The Board agrees to recognize representatives of the Association at its regular meetings to discuss appropriate topics. To insure proper consideration of each topic, the Association shall submit its request in writing to the Superintendent, giving details of the topic to be discussed. Additionally, it states, "Any individual or group of employees may present views and opinions to the Board at a regular meeting after having filed proper notice."

We have collective concerns as a union body. Those concerns continue to bubble up through our building leaders. Now, it is time to let them be heard.

## Mutual Motherhood

Maria Shriver once said, "The responsibility of rearing good, kind, ethical, responsible human beings—is the biggest job anyone can embark on." The mothers within our union, not only take on this challenge on the homefront but then leave for work, and help our the students of our schools with that same passion, love and conviction. It is long overdue that we, as a union, recognize the unique challenges this brings. We must give our mothers voice and help to ensure that being both an educational professional and a mother can coexist. To help move this, SEA has created a Mutual Motherhood Committee. Its aim is to analyze how effective our district and union are at making the opportunities that motherhood and a career are for our members, and help to move progressively in our areas of concern.

## Calendar of Events

### May

3 BOE, 1900, 6:30 p.m.

Sick Bank, 1900, 4:00 p.m.

11 AR/Exec Meeting, PDC, 4:20 p.m.

11 High School Solutions, PDC, 5:30 p.m.

15 BOE, 1900, 6:30 p.m.

17 BOE, 1900, 6:30 p.m.

18 Grievance, PDC, 4:00 p.m.

\* All meetings at IEA PDC (3440 Liberty Drive) unless otherwise noted.