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dedicated career teachers start in earnest. One
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retiree health care, but shored up the system's
viability for many years to come. Oh, and along
the way, also saved taxpayers millions of dollars a
year in the process.

State Treasurer Beth Pearce and House Speaker
Shap Smith last month vowed to protect
the state's decades-old teachers' pension
despite ongoing calls to shift toward a defined
contribution, 401-K style system.

"I am a firm believer that defined benefit plans are
more effective and cost less in the long run than
any type of defined contribution plan," Pearce
told a gathering of lawmakers, public employees
and policy experts. "Any talk of cutting benefits is
really just shooting yourself in the foot. Retirees
buy goods and services, too."

Every late summer, the calls to substantially
change the way Vermont takes care of its
dedicated career teachers start in earnest. One
pernicious and persistent idea -- to force new hires
into a 401-K style defined contribution scheme -- is
always advanced by former KPMG executive David
Coates. That suggestion -- which has never really
gained much traction in recent years -- was firmly
batted down by Pearce and Smith.

"As long as I'm around, I pledge to keep our
commitment for a fully funded pension for the
people who have worked hard their whole lives," Smith
said. "The Legislature owes it to workers to
keep the promises that have been made."

Pearce pointed to numerous studies that
show defined benefit pensions are better able
to weather economic downturns, cost less,
and provide more stability than their defined
contribution counterparts.

According to a Towers Watson study cited by
Pearce:

- Defined benefit plans outperformed
defined contribution plans during stock market
downturns between 2009 and 2011. In 2011,
the over-performance was the highest since
1995.

- Among the largest one-sixth of plans,
defined benefit plans have outperformed
defined contribution plans by almost a full
percentage point since 1995.

- While defined contribution plans
outperform pensions in market booms, they
do not weather downturns nearly as well.

"Reliable and adequate income in retirement is
important to Vermont's economic prosperity,"
Pearce said. "It's one thing, she said, to make
promises, but quite another to back those
promises up with the resources to keep them.

"You can't invest promises, you can't invest IOUs,"
she said. "You need hard, cold cash."

Founded in 1947, the Vermont State Teachers'
Retirement System had about $1.7 billion in
assets in 2014. The system relies on contributions
from teachers (between 5 percent and 6 percent
of their salary), contributions from the state and
returns on investment. For many years, the state
did not live up to its obligations -- a scenario that
played out in both Democratic and Republican
administrations.

Smith made it clear that fully funding the state's
obligation to current and retired teachers is a
high priority.

"The system has 48,000 beneficiaries," he said.
"That's 48,000 promises. And that's 48,000
promises we intend to keep."

Keeping those promises has been something
Vermont-NEA has fought hard for in the
last several years. In both 2010 and 2014,
teachers stepped up to the plate and agreed to
concessions that not only ended up expanding
retiree health care, but shored up the system's
viability for many years to come. Oh, and along
the way, also saved taxpayers millions of dollars a
year in the process.

Pearce noted that so-called normal costs
dropped in half -- from $22.8 million annually in
2011 to $10.4 million today. That's $12.4 million in
savings -- every year -- directly attributable to you
and your fellow teachers.

"I give Vermont-NEA full credit for saving our
pension system millions of dollars every year,"
Pearce said. "To those who would say the unions
are the problem, they are wrong. Unions are very
much a part of the solution."
As you know, the Agency of Education and State Board of Education have adopted Education Quality Standards (EQS) here in Vermont. In order to assess whether or not schools are achieving these standards, the Education Quality Review (EQR) process has been developed, and this year, sixteen districts and SUs are participating in the EQR pilot program. If you haven’t read these documents, you may find them on the AOE website.

The Education Quality Standards require each school to have a continuous improvement plan, and within that plan the learning environment is addressed: “The plan shall contain strategies and supports to ensure the school maintains a safe, orderly, civil and positive learning environment which is free from harassment, hazing and bullying.”

Once the standards are in place, the EQR teams will visit schools and assess five dimensions of school quality. One of those dimensions is a safe school climate.

The reason I bring this to your attention is that many of our schools are not safe right now, for staff or students. I am not talking about the danger of an intruder, or even bullying or harassment. Yes, those are very real concerns and they must be, and are being, addressed in our schools. Instead, I am talking about staff and student safety in regard to violent student behavior.

Over the past several years there has been a dramatic increase in injuries to staff due to student attacks and violent behavior. The result of this situation in a classroom is devastating. Not only are the violent student’s needs not being addressed, but the students who witness this behavior are traumatized.

Our staff, teachers and ESP alike, are faced with undue stress as they cope with students who are not able to function safely in the regular classroom. Some of these students may be placed in a special classroom, but even there, they become violent, causing staff injuries and sometimes even hospitalization.

Schools can do just so much when faced with issues stemming from societal ills. Our opiate drug addiction problem is huge and the children of addicted parents are left to fend for themselves at a very young age. We are seeing these young Vermonters come to school with no preparation, unable to use some of the most basic social skills.

The idea of actually teaching academics to these children is out of the question. Meanwhile, those who come to school ready to learn are forced to watch multiple confrontations and violent behavior. Their learning is not the kind they and their parents expect to find in our public school system. Our schools should be safe for all students.

Many of our schools will not meet the dimension of school quality that speaks to safe schools and a positive learning environment. Our students are in danger of losing precious time learning and thriving in our schools unless we take action, now.

If you or your colleagues are faced with these challenges and become injured, we want to hear about it. Contact your UniServ director, or me, mallen@vtnea.org to keep us informed. Remember to fill out an accident report form, too, and keep clear records of what is going on in your classroom or school.

Talk to your administrators. Make sure you have a staff and student safety committee of some sort that will take stock of the situation and make concrete plans to deescalate violent behavior in your schools. If your district or SU is in the EQR pilot program, teachers are expected to participate in the process. Make sure that your local association is represented in anything to do with the Education Quality Review process.

This is not just a school problem, it is societal.

Community groups, law enforcement, mental health and our schools must work together, first admitting that there is a problem and then working together to make our schools safe and welcoming places of learning, once again.
8 Tips for Effective Back-to-School Nights

1. Get the Essential Forms

By NEA Member Benefits

Educators share their tried-and-true tips to help you make back-to-school night a success.

John Waite, an English teacher at Downers Grove North High School in suburban Chicago, used to get nervous before parents visited his classroom each fall. He only had 11 minutes with each set of parents, and he wasn’t sure what they wanted him to talk about.

1. So, he sent out a survey.

“I thought, if I want to make this 11 minutes the most meaningful 11 minutes I can, the only way I can have some certainty about that is to ask them what they want to hear,” Waite says.

Using his school’s electronic grade book, Waite sent out a form asking parents to choose from topics like “How Teaching Has Changed,” “Homework,” “The AP Test,” and “Grading Policies.” He still can’t cover everything, but he knows he’s hitting the information parents want most, and the prospect of facing down parents no longer makes him sweat.

Some districts call it “Back-to-School Night.” For others, it’s “Open House” or “Curriculum Night.” Whatever your name for it, here are seven more tips for making the event productive and free of stress.

2. Show Enthusiasm

Parents can learn your grading policy from a handout, but they can only learn about your passion for teaching from watching and listening to you.

Instead of boasting to parents about how hard he’s planning on making students work, he tells them the story of a girl who—after weeks of saying “I hate this book”—came to love William Faulkner’s “As I Lay Dying.”

Genia Connell, a third-grade teacher in Troy, Michigan, tells parents about a project where parents can select an item to buy for the classroom. Instead, he says, parents should simply put extra items like dry-erase markers on the school supplies list as “optional” items.

3. Talk About Your Teaching Philosophy

Waite was surprised that “Teaching Philosophy” turned out to be a top pick on the parent surveys. He still can’t cover everything, but he knows he’s hitting the information parents want most, and the prospect of facing down parents no longer makes him sweat.

Some districts call it “Back-to-School Night.” For others, it’s “Open House” or “Curriculum Night.” Whatever your name for it, here are seven more tips for making the event productive and free of stress.

4. Get the Essential Forms

You don’t want to spend the whole night on it, but you really do need to make sure parents fill out and turn in a few basic documents, such as emergency contact forms. Joanne Baker, a first-grade teacher in Front Royal, Virginia, gives parents a checklist at the front of their packets and then has her students unpack their supplies. “I tell them, ‘While you’re working on that, I’m going to talk to mom and dad,’ and we go through the paperwork packet.”

If you don’t get those forms that first night, you may spend weeks hounding parents, warns Brian Smith, a kindergarten teacher in North Carolina. “You become the nag, and that’s not the first idea I want parents to have of me,” he says.

5. Make a Freebie

Especially in the lower grades, Smith says, the “cute factor” can go a long way with parents. That’s one reason he uses Vistaprint to make theme magnets with his phone extension and email address. “I say, ‘Put this on your fridge this year, and then you’ll always know how to get a hold of me.’”

6. Ask for Volunteer Help...

The beginning of the year is a great time to sign up volunteers. Not everyone will follow through, and some may only show up once. But this may be your best opportunity all year to identify which parents are interested in reading to kids, leveling your classroom library or even helping you cut shapes out of construction paper.

“A lot of times parents aren’t sure if they’re welcome in classrooms,” Baker says. “Right away, I’ll have a sign-up and say, ‘I need your help.’”

Give parents different options. Some may not be comfortable working directly with kids, but would be willing to help you whittle away at your clerical work!

7. ...But Maybe Not Supplies

Smith cautions against having a “wish tree” where parents can select an item to buy for the classroom. Instead, he says, parents should simply put extra items like dry-erase markers on the school supplies list as “optional” items.

“Don’t ask parents for extra stuff at Open House,” Smith says. “They’ve already gone out and bought all the things you’ve asked of them. No one wants to be the only parent that can’t afford to go up and get something from the wish tree.”

8. Keep Things Simple

Because time is so limited, it can be tempting to rush through pages of important information on Back-to-School Night. But you don’t want to leave parents with a first impression that you’re a fast-talking taskmaster who just stands at the front of the room and lectures.

“Parents don’t come to go through a big thick packet,” says Connell. “They want to know who their child is going to be spending the year with. I try to keep it simple. I tell them my goal is to help their children be the best they can and do the best they can do—to help them have a fun and successful year.”

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Vermont-NEA Today • October 2015 3
The Vermont Education Health Initiative on Sept. 22 filed for a 7.9 percent increase in premiums, citing increased use and cost of prescription drugs, higher amounts of claims, and increasing federal and state assessments.

The increase, which must be approved by the Vermont Department of Financial Regulation, is higher than the 4.5 percent approved for the current school year. “Looking back over the last 10 years...VEHI’s health program rate increases averaged 4.9 percent,” VEHI said in a statement. “This impressive fact, and the long-term savings attributable to it for all parties, does not remove the challenge of this 7.9 percent rate increase. We understand that.”

According to VEHI, the biggest drivers of the rate increase are rising costs in pharmaceuticals and medical inflation. “These are chronic challenges across Vermont and nationally,” VEHI said. “And they drive much of the work of the Green Mountain Care Board. VEHI is not immune from these pressures.

In prescription drugs, for instance, VEHI reported that the number of prescriptions actually dropped. However, the cost of specialty drugs rose by 22 percent, and those costs account for more than a third of all prescription costs across the risk pool. One drug used to treat Hepatitis C – Sovaldi – accounted for nearly 59 percent of the total increase in prescription drugs.

The cost of providing care continues to rise, VEHI said. “Our medical claims costs continue to rise, and the increase in claims is driven mainly by increased costs for services.”

Of the projected $43 per member, per month cost increase for the 2016-17 school year, $12.53 is because of five different state and federal assessments.

“VEHI, like all entities engaged in the health insurance market, is subject to cost pressures beyond its immediate or direct control: medical cost and inflationary trends, specialty drugs, mandates and assessments, federal and state reforms, and unanticipated or unnecessary utilization trends,” VEHI said, noting that the program will continue to take “defensive” actions to guard against spikes in costs.

The program told school boards and local associations to use the 7.9 percent increase in their budgeting process for the upcoming school year.

Of course, the actual rate won’t be set until the Department of Financial Regulation makes its decision.

“VEHI has served its members and subscribers for over 20 years,” VEHI said. “We will continue to do so as long as we offer benefit programs and services of real value to school districts and their employees.

“One thing is certain: the future will be different from the past, and VEHI is determined to find its place in this future by adapting innovatively to fundamental changes in the insurance market brought on by the ACA and other reforms.”
**Your Union**

**Rutland Northeast Paras, Drivers Reject Imposition**

from p. 1

finding report “paves a way toward settlement,” Johnson said. “We are not interested in seeing this imposition stand, and we urge the boards to remember how much better negotiations used to be,” Johnson said. “We ask the boards to join us again at the table, and urge them to stay there until we reach a settlement that is fair to us, fair to our communities and good for our schools. We know we can – we’ve done it before.”

Johnson formally notified the boards of the unanimous rejection of their imposed working conditions at a September 16 meeting of the Rutland Northeast Supervisory Union executive board.

Flanked by fellow members, Johnson said:

Good evening. My name is Loretta Johnson, and I am a paraeducator who is president of the Rutland Northeast Education Association’s support staff unit. I am here tonight to address your imposition of working conditions at the end of the school year. Yesterday, I and my fellow members voted unanimously to reject your imposition. The reasons we reject the imposition are numerous. We are disappointed you chose to walk away from the table last year instead of staying there until we reached a settlement.

We are insulted that you chose to throw away a long history of good labor relations. We are dismayed that you chose this route – which does nothing to bring us closer – instead of doing what you’ve always done in the past.

We urge you to correct that mistake, and work with us to reach a settlement that is fair to us, fair to our communities and good for our students and schools.

We have a natural place to start – the fact-finder’s report gives us very good map on the road to a settlement. Please resume negotiations with us, and stay at the table until the job is done.

We know you can do it – because together we have always reached amicable settlements. This round of negotiations was the first in anyone’s memory where the two sides couldn’t reach an agreement. The paras and bus drivers, among the lowest paid workers in the supervisory union’s schools, are urging the boards to resume bargaining. The boards told the Rutland Herald they don’t want to talk about the imposition.

The local will continue to press the boards to come to the table until a settlement is reached. Members will not accept the imposition.

**Your Power**

**Labor Is Crucial on Path to the Good Life**

Former Rep. John Moran was honored last month by the Vermont Democratic Party for his years of activism on behalf of working people. Dozens of people – Sen. Patrick Leahy as well as two of the three Democrats running for governor – showed up to honor Moran and celebrate working families.

In accepting the John Murphy Advocate of Labor Award, Moran paid tribute to labor and politicians who choose to work with us. Here are his remarks.

Once upon a time, Labor and the Democratic Party walked together in a grand journey for all Americans. When Woodrow Wilson pushed for the right to vote for women, he turned for help to labor. When FDR wanted support for the New Deal, he turned to the unions. When LBJ wanted civil rights legislation, he turned to Walter Reuther and other labor leaders.

Along the road we have posted landmarks for the good life: the forty hour work week, eight hour workday, overtime pay, workers compensation, unemployment insurance, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, family and medical leave, occupational safety, collective bargaining, the minimum wage and child labor laws.

In post World War II, it seemed that we were arriving at our destination of the American Promise: strong union membership, secure employment, a 30-year mortgage on a home to raise our children who would have lives better than ours.

Then side paths and road blocks separated us. Many who achieved the American Promise went off on social and environmental paths, and those denied that promise charted independent courses.

But our real challenge has come from right wing roadblocks. Reagan firing the air traffic controllers, unionized industries moving to antiunion locations, the growth of non-union service and tourism jobs, austerity and budget cutting, and the systematic hostility, not only to labor, but to all of us with denial of climate change, refusal to fund reproductive rights, thwarting voter registration, opposing campaign finance reform and doing everything possible to increase income and wealth inequality.

Time for us to regroup.

Perhaps we should be thankful to the right wing for spewing forth positions that unite all of us in opposition.

We will march for publicly financed universal healthcare, labor’s right to organize, the honoring of collectively bargained agreements, environmental protection, a woman’s right to equal pay and reproductive choices, a teacher’s right to strike, care for the ill and disabled, and livable wage jobs available to all Vermonters.

In solidarity, we will be the voices for economic, racial, gender, social and environmental justice.
Your Union
Unions Good for Kids, Salaries
from p. 8

One of the challenges facing the U.S. today is the need to reduce income inequality and increase economic mobility, said Freeman.

“As the country is trying to reduce inequality and certainly stop it from growing, the absence of strong unions makes that so much harder,” he said.

According to the report, unions advocate for policies that benefit working people, such as minimum wage increases and increased expenditures on schools and public services.

“There is someone who speaks for everyone but for the middle class,” said Summers, referring to politicians and other national leaders.

“Traditionally, the labor movement spoke for the middle class.”

The findings show that children growing up in union households tend to have better outcomes than children who grew up in nonunion households, especially when the parents are low skilled. For example, children of non-college-educated fathers earn 28 percent more if their father was in a labor union. This analysis helps provide evidence suggesting a link between unions and economic mobility.

“We need to look at what unions have done historically to help families,” Freeman said.

The report finds that there are direct effects that a parent’s union membership may have on their children. For example, union workers make more money than comparable nonunion workers, known as the “union premium.” As such, offspring of union parents benefit. Also, union jobs may be more stable and predictable, which could produce a more stable living environment for children, who are more likely to have health insurance as a result of their parents’ family plans.

According to the report, a union presence potentially helps all children since nonunion workers often experience wage increases due to the gains negotiated by their union colleagues. Still, resistance to union organizing is prevalent among public- and private-sector workplaces.

“I think, no one could argue that the assistance to resistance of unionization during Republican administrations has not been successfully offset by anything that has happened during Democratic administrations,” said Summers. “That has contributed in an important way to the decline of private-sector unionism.”

Summers pointed to education policies surrounding charter schools as an example of ill-conceived public policy that used taxpayer dollars to serve only a privileged few.

“There are never going to be enough charter schools for one-quarter of kids let alone for all kids,” he said.

“This is not a credible response to the challenges of the economy in 2015.”

In addition, outdated organizing models that have “not fully adapted to the changing nature of the workforce,” are also keeping union membership down, said Summers.

“It is a workforce in which there are more people who work flexible schedules, (and where) workers think of themselves as working in partnership with employers, and where there are more pink collar and white collar workers than blue collar,” he said.

“There has not been full adaptation on the part of those seeking to organize to all those realities.”

Your Union
Report Violence in Your Classroom

As Vermont-NEA President Martha Allen writes on page 2, instances of disruptive and violent students in our classrooms are becoming more frequent.

For the teachers and paraeducators directly involved, the results can be downright dangerous: some have been punched, head-butted, spat upon and even had furniture hurled in their direction. But even worse is the toll it takes on the other students, students who are ready to learn and instead are traumatized by violence and disrespectful behavior.

The state's social services providers are strained to the breaking point, making it difficult to deal with the many problems associated with drug addiction, poverty and mental illnesses. As a result, some students come to school without the wherewithal to participate and learn.

We know that problems aren’t isolated to any one school or district; in fact, we’ve learned of incidents from all corners of the state. This is a very serious issue that has very serious consequences to our members, our schools, and students.

We are just now beginning to collect stories of disruption and violence in the classroom. If you have experienced violence in your classroom, please let us know by sending us an email (go to the contact us page on vtnea.org, or shoot a note to Martha at mallen@vtnea.org. Your stories will be confidential, but they will help us as we formulate our legislative agenda around this issue.

Of course, you should always document every instance of violence; seek medical attention immediately if you’ve been hurt, and notify and file a report with your school administrator. We know that we are very much a part of the solution to violence and disruption in the classroom. Most importantly, we have to stick together until school administrators, social service providers and politicians treat the problem of disruption and violence in our schools with urgency.
They’re On To You: A Texas Mom Spills Educators’ Secrets

Note: This blog post was written by Candice, a regular contributor to Alamo City Moms. When we shared this on our Facebook page, more than 3,500 people read it. Enjoy!

Dear teachers,

As a mom to a gaggle of kids, I’m a little consumed this time of year. I’ve spent hours at the store going over different school supplies lists and checking off stuff as I throw it in my cart. The total adds up in my head as I travel down each aisle, and I get a little sick to my stomach. I’m well over my budget and have a full cart before I even get to the aisle with the lunchboxes. I don’t even want to think about packing lunches for the kids each morning, and I’m exhausted just looking at the Pinterest posts on how all the good moms do it. I’m praying that no one laughs at my eye rolls.

We have six kids in our home that we are sending off to school this year—five of whom are girls. Do you know what it takes mentally to school clothes-shop for five girls? Aside from emptying our bank account at Target’s and Old Navy’s clearance sections, we also have to schedule eye doctor appointments for the teenagers because we fear they may have damaged their vision due to intense eye rolls.

My nights for the next nine months will be filled with trying to get dinner on the table at a decent hour while managing piles upon piles of forms I need to fill out, slips I need to turn in, meetings I need to attend, box tops I need to cut, and t-shirts I need to buy. And let’s not even talk about trying to find the lost library books that have completely vanished in the kids’ rooms.

Then there’s the emotional hit I’ll take when I drop my babies off with their new backpacks snugly hugging their bodies. I’ll quickly snap as many pictures as I can in an effort to catch this moment that will soon be gone forever. I’ll face the lunchbox aisle and that you pray the other kids who walk into it. I know you had a supplies list that was much longer than mine and carefully checked off each item as you put it in your cart, knowing that you were well over budget. I’ll bet your cart was full with teaching supplies before you even made it to the lunchbox aisle and that you pray the other teachers won’t laugh at you when you pull out your Lunchables.

Bottom line, sweet teachers: school just started, and I’m wiped out. I’m a little sad, and my bank account is definitely a little lighter. Then I see you.

I see that you’re dressed in your nicest outfit, which I have no doubt you carefully planned and possibly changed a time or two. Your makeup is fresh, and every hair on your head is perfectly placed. Your smile is beyond inviting, and I almost blush as I walk into your room.

I see that you’ve gone all out. As I set my bags of supplies down on the desk, I see my child’s name written in the most beautiful handwriting, carefully added to her desk and sitting next to a princess cup to hold her pencils. Well done. I’ll admit that I’m completely overwhelmed by your room. Seriously, where does one get all of those alphabet letters, addition and multiplication cards, tubs for literally everything, and adorable banner above your desk? How many hours did you spend in this room before you decided it was ready?

I see every detail you’ve added to my child’s learning environment.

I see that you’ve spent a good amount of your summer and almost all of your “spare” money making sure your classroom is a warm and inviting learning place for all the precious children who walk into it. I know you had a supplies list that was much longer than mine and carefully checked off each item as you put it in your cart, knowing that you were well over budget. I’ll bet your cart was full with teaching supplies before you even made it to the lunchbox aisle and that you pray the other teachers won’t laugh at you when you pull out your Lunchable.

I see that the next nine months will be filled with trying to get dinner on the table at a decent hour while you manage piles upon piles of forms you need to fill out, slips you need to turn in, meetings you need to attend, box tops you need to count, and papers you need to grade. And let’s not even talk about trying to recover the lost library books that haven’t made it back to school yet.

I see the emotions behind your pretty smile. You’ve been anticipating these students since the bell rang on the last day of school last year. You eagerly awaited your class list and carefully went down and checked it out, name by precious name. Your classroom has sat empty for the past three months, and you’re excited to have it filled with tiny voices again. I see you patiently pose for pictures with each child as their parents fumble with their cameras, trying to focus through the tears. It will be a while before you get to just sit down in the quiet and take a deep breath, but I see you rejoice in that.

Bottom line, sweet teachers: school just started, and I’ll bet you’re wiped out and definitely a little lighter in the bank account; but I see you. I see how hard you’ve worked before the first day of school even started. I see that you chose this job not to get rich or famous. I see that you chose this job because you love it and the kids, and because you know that the sacrifices you’ve made, money you’ve spent, and hours you’ve dedicated outside of that building are molding our younger generation to grow up to do big things.

Wonderful teachers, we’re in this together, and I see you.
Study: Kids In Union Households Earn More as Adults

BY JOHN ROSALES, NEA Today

Children whose parents belonged to a union as well as those who grew up in geographic areas with high union membership climb higher up the career ladder and earn more money as adults, according to a report by the Center for American Progress (CAP).

The report was released Wednesday at CAP headquarters in Washington, D.C., accompanied by a panel discussion which included former U.S. Secretary of the Treasury Lawrence Summers, Richard Freeman, co-author of the report and an economics professor at Harvard University, and CAP managing director of economic policy and report co-author, David Madland.

Unions are a significant predictor of economic mobility even after controlling for variables including race, industry type, education level of parents, and other factors, said Madland, during his presentation of the report, Bargaining for the American Dream: What Unions do for Mobility.

“We found that regions with greater union density had higher mobility for low-income children,” Madland said. “We also found that having a union parent leads to better educational and health outcomes for children.”

The authors, including Wellesley College Professor Eunice Han and CAP policy analyst Brendan Duke, identified this intergenerational union effect as being stronger for less-educated and less-skilled parents. Previous economic studies were referenced by the authors, Madland said, particularly one that employed five factors showing the strongest geographical relationship with mobility: single motherhood rates, income inequality, high school dropout rates, social capital, and segregation.

The CAP report may be the first, according to researchers, to examine the relationship between mobility and another variable that had not been considered: union membership.

“Researchers have produced a plethora of studies on how falling union membership has increased income inequality, and this report will hopefully inspire others to examine the relationship between unions and mobility,” according to the authors.

continued on p. 6

Make the Grade

Did you know that Vermont-NEA is one of the premiere providers of professional development opportunities in Vermont? Your union has an array of offerings designed to let you get the most out of your practice. Head on over to vtnea.org and look under “Your Profession.”

8 Ways to Make Back-to-School Night a Success, p. 3
President’s View: It’s Time to Admit We Have Violence in Schools, p. 2
VEHI Seeks 7.9% Hike Because of Drugs, Rising Medical Costs, p. 3

U-32 High School Association’s Eric Weiss celebrates Bernie’s bid at the NEA RA in Orlando. Eric just ended six years as your NEA Director.