



Commonwealth of Kentucky
Office of the Governor

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Contact: Kerri Richardson
502.564.2611
502.330.6633

Terry Sebastian
502.564.2611
502.229.6130

Sara Robertson
202.230.8978
srobertson@nea.org

**NEA honors Steve Beshear with America's Greatest Education Governor
Award**

Educators recognize Gov. Beshear's efforts to improve public schools

FRANKFORT, Ky. (June 30, 2011) — The National Education Association announced today that Gov. Steve Beshear of Kentucky is this year's recipient of the America's Greatest Education Governor Award. The annual award recognizes and honors governors who have made major, state-level education strides that improve public schools.

"Gov. Beshear has shown unwavering support for Kentucky's students and educators," said Dennis Van Roekel, president of NEA. "He championed quality preschool programs – one of the best investments our country can make – as well as raising the dropout age in Kentucky to 18. And in the midst of budget cuts, he fought to preserve resources for K-12 education and the Commonwealth's students and classrooms. He has repeatedly stood strong for Kentucky's students and schools."

"The most important investment a state can make is in the education of its children, and that's why I have fought hard to protect the basic funding for our classrooms despite nine rounds of budget cuts," said Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear. "I am very pleased our efforts are being honored, and pledge to keep fighting for Kentucky's future."

Despite repeated budget shortfalls, Gov. Beshear has protected the main education funding formula from cuts. During his term, Kentucky has moved into the top 20 in the United States in fourth-grade and eight-grade reading scores. He also signed legislation to make it easier for

higher education students to transfer credits from a community or technical college to any of Kentucky's four-year universities.

“Throughout his distinguished career, Gov. Beshear has been a friend and advocate for educators. In these tough economic times, he's advanced children's health, advocated for common sense pension reform, and protected our members' health care,” said Sharron K. Oxendine, president of Kentucky Education Association and a math teacher from Clark County, KY. “There is not better friend of public education and educators than Steve Beshear.”

NEA President Dennis Van Roekel will present the award to Gov. Beshear on Sunday before nearly 9,000 educators attending NEA's Representative Assembly in Chicago. Beshear is the fourth recipient of the prestigious award.

***High resolution photos of this event can be downloaded from
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/neapr/sets>***

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The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing 3.2 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators and students preparing to become teachers.