AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY DEPARTMENT OF NORTH DAKOTA
Arliss Koski, Department Education Chairman
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November 2026

During the 2026–2027 administrative year, I will serve as your Department Education Chairman. Last year, I had the honor of serving as your Americanism Chairman.

Education is an area that is important to me. I worked in the Mandan public school system for more than 31 years before retiring in 2025. Even though I am retired, I still enjoy back-to-school shopping for supplies and find it an excellent way to support the youth and teachers in our communities.

There are many ways to promote the Education program within your school districts and throughout your community, including at daycare centers and among homeschool families. In this article, I have included the program's purpose, deadlines, important dates, and the National Education Program Engagement Plan.

Please review this information at an upcoming Unit meeting and discuss opportunities for both your Unit and individual members to promote Education. Also, please make sure your local schools, homeschool families, and others in your community are aware of the scholarships available through the American Legion Auxiliary.

One of our first observances is Education Month. In addition to the deadlines listed below, the American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) designates October as Education Month at the local and department levels. It is an opportunity to launch school supply drives, connect with local school districts, and honor teachers. Please consider completing one or more of the following activities to recognize Education Month or National Education Week, November 16–20, 2026, in your community.

- Collect and donate school supplies.
- Honor teachers in your community.
- Donate Halloween coloring books to an elementary classroom or daycare center.
- Donate books that promote Americanism.
- Visit a local school to promote ALA programs.

I welcome photos or news articles about any activities you complete to promote Education. Please email them to me at education@ndala.org.

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PURPOSE: The purpose of the Education Committee is to promote quality education for children—especially military children—and adults. *Standing Rule No. 6, Mission Outreach Programs.*

DEADLINES AND IMPORTANT DATES

- *November 16–20, 2026: American Education Week*
- *March 1, 2027: National scholarship applications are due*
- *April 15, 2027: Purple Up! Day for Military Children*
- *May 3–7, 2027: Teacher Appreciation Week*
- *May 15, 2027: Department chairmen's reports are due to division chairmen*
- *June 1, 2027: Award submissions are due*

EDUCATION PROGRAM ENGAGEMENT PLAN — Promote quality education for children, especially military children, and adults.

- Participate in ALA's Give 10 to Education program.
    - Present a "Give 10 to Education" certificate to members who donate at least 10 items to schools.
- Participate in Teacher Appreciation Week.
    - Contact local parent-teacher organizations or schools to identify opportunities your Unit could sponsor or support, such as donating doughnuts to local schools.
    - Show appreciation for teachers by designing and presenting certificates of appreciation.
    - Provide Teacher Survival Kits containing fun and useful items, such as candy, snacks, tea bags, coffee, restaurant gift cards, or classroom supplies.
- Participate in American Education Week, held each November.
- Recognize school administrators and staff with special treats and an ALA American Education Week card, available for download at: https://www.legion-aux.org
- Encourage schools to participate in the Month of the Military Child and Purple Up! Day in April to honor military-connected students.
    - Sponsor a Purple Up! Day at your school on April 15, 2027, by providing purple items for students to wear.
    - Present the Military Child's Table at a school, Unit meeting, or American Legion post.
    - Sponsor a celebration for military children at your school.
- Encourage schools to invite veterans to speak in their classrooms.
    - Work with your American Legion post to participate in "Veterans in Community Schools."
    - Ask teachers to have their students make cards for veterans.
    - Work with teachers to help students prepare questions for the veterans.
- Support and promote the American Legion Family's Education Program and scholarship opportunities.
    - Promote American Legion Auxiliary scholarships. National ALA scholarship applications are available and can be completed online at: https://www.legion-aux.org.

  - Promote The American Legion's scholarships and learn more by visiting: https://www.legion.org/scholarships.
- Provide scholarships for students pursuing a college education.
  - Work with your Unit to establish a scholarship.
  - Ask local schools for permission to create bulletin boards highlighting American Legion Family scholarship opportunities.
  - Publish scholarship information in local newspapers and libraries and on your Unit's social media channels.
  - Host a "Scholarship Night" virtual meeting to inform students and parents about American Legion Family scholarship opportunities.
  - Partner with a local college to provide students with scholarship information.
  - Ask your local board of education to host scholarship workshops in its schools.
    - Work with schools to invite college administrators to speak.
    - Have volunteers assist students with scholarship applications.
- Support legislation that establishes new scholarship opportunities.
  - Support The American Legion's advocacy efforts by signing up for legislative alerts at https://www.votervoice.net/AmericanLegion/home.
  - Contact your state and national representatives and ask them to support scholarship opportunities, particularly for veterans, service members, and their families.