



Washoe Education Association Monthly Newsletter

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- October 6th**
Retirement Seminar - PERS
4:15pm in the WEA Office
- October 13th**
Retirement Seminar - Social Security
4:15pm in the WEA Office
- October 20th**
Retirement Seminar - Financial Planning
4:15pm in the WEA Office
- October 28th**
Nevada Day
WEA Office Closed
- November 2nd**
Rep Council
4:30pm in the WEA Office
- November 3rd**
Retirement Seminar - ESIP/Health Insurance
4:15pm in the WEA Office

WEA Committees Working for You

Dana Galvin / WEA President

The WEA has four committees that work behind the scenes to make our association stronger and better for you, the members.

The Awards Committee is chaired by Nicolette Andrini – WEA High School Director, Hug HS. The Awards Committee selects educators and other “friends of education” who have rendered outstanding contributions to education. Those selected are honored at the annual WEA Awards Banquet.

The Government Relations/TIP Committee is chaired by Phil Kaiser – WEA At-Large Director, McQueen HS. The WEA carries on an active political action program through its Government Relations and Teachers in Politics (TIP) Committees. With the help of the committees, the WEA interviews and endorses candidates identified as friends of education. The committees also study pending legislation, draw up resolutions for our lobbyists, and promote the passage of desirable state legislation for schools.

The Membership Committee is chaired by Jane Bantz – WEA Vice President, RPDP. The Membership Committee works throughout the year with the help of Building Reps and other interested educators to promote WEA membership. The WEA, with the financial backing

from Chapman Financial Group, Inc., is now offering a \$25.00 finder's fee to any WEA member who works with a local business to get a discount for our members.

The TACT (Teachers and Community Together) is co-chaired by Dawn Miller – WEA Elementary Director, Lincoln Park ES, and Robert Munson – WEA At-Large Director, Wooster HS. The TACT Committee works to promote good relations between the public and the school community. This committee sponsors the WEA Bookmark Contest and Senior Recognition Day. These committee chairpersons are always looking for new members with new ideas. Please, think about joining.

One of the bills passed during the 2011 Legislative Session was AB 222. This bill creates a Teachers and Leaders Council. This council will develop the new teacher evaluation that will be based on a four tier structure. Four out of the 15 members of the council will be NSEA members. NSEA submitted names to the Governor and the Washoe County teachers chosen for this important committee are Theresa Crowley, Cannan ES, and Barbara Suritte-Barker, Sparks MS.

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It Shouldn't Happen - But it Does

Elaine Lancaster / Executive Director

Unfortunately, educators are sometimes accused by parents and students of doing and saying things that are not true. It is vitally important that if you find yourself in this situation, you contact one of us **immediately**.

Oftentimes, school police or your administrator will ask you to put your account of the accusation in writing. We urge you to contact us and let us review your statement before you give it to anyone.

If you are asked to meet with school police, you should be told you are entitled to representation: do not meet with them without one of us present!

Legal Services Comes to the Reno Office

Elaine Lancaster / Executive Director

As you know, WEA members are entitled to two ½ hour sessions with a lawyer to discuss non-job-related issues. The association's law firm, Dyer, Lawrence, Penrose, Flaherty and Donaldson, will begin scheduling appointments for members in the Reno office. These will happen on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month. Just call or email Chelsea Canon at the WEA office (828-3026 or ccanon@washoeschools.net), tell her the type of issue you would like to speak with a lawyer about, and she will get you on the schedule.

If a parent has filled out a public complaint form against you, you are entitled to see the form. Your administrator will contact the parent and the area superintendent. The association cannot attend meetings where parents are present, but you may have a colleague attend to take notes of what was said. At the follow-up meeting, the WEA can be in attendance.

It is extremely important that these matters be taken very seriously. There have been instances when the matter has been turned over to the District Attorney's office. We **strongly** encourage you to contact us at the first sign of a problem.

Retirement Seminars

WEA's Retirement Seminars, for members only, will be held this month. Presentations concerning PERS (October 6th), Social Security (October 13th), Financial and Estate Planning (October 20th), and ESIP & Health Insurance (November 3rd) are scheduled. The meetings start at 4:15 at the WEA office.

If you are considering retiring, we strongly encourage you to attend these seminars. To reserve your space, call or email Chelsea Canon, the WEA office manager, and let her know that you are attending.

If you can't attend one of the sessions this month, they will repeat in January, and you can mix and match from both sets of seminars. Spouses are welcome to attend with you.

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Currently, there are also three district committees on which WEA members serve:

The Insurance Committee: Kathy Howard, Sparks HS; Jeanie Onitsuka, School Nurse; Christine Verre, Booth ES; Robert Munson, Wooster HS.

The Peer Assistance Review Board (PAR) Committee: Theresa Crowley, Cannan ES; Fran McGregor, Depoali MS; Sue Vaughn, McQueen HS.

The Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) Performance Pay Committee: Barbara Suritte-Barker, Sparks MS; Mary Owens, Duncan ES; Leina Santana, Clayton MS.

As other district committees arise we will be looking for members to serve on them as well.

NEA Life Insurance

All WEA members can take advantage of the valuable, automatic term life insurance coverage provided by NEA Complimentary Life Insurance (formerly known as NEA DUES-TAB). As part of your WEA/NSEA/NEA membership, you gain complimentary, automatic coverage.

Although you are automatically covered, you can register a beneficiary of your choice if you have not already done so - contact the WEA Office for the appropriate form.

This free program provides members with:

- Up to \$1,000 of term life insurance
- Up to \$5,000 of accidental death and dismemberment coverage
- Up to \$50,000 of AD&D insurance for any covered accident that occurs while on the job or serving as an Association Leader
- \$150,000 of life insurance for unlawful homicide while on the job

Knowing Your Legal Benefits

Legal Services Program

What if I am threatened with termination? All members are represented by a UniServ Staffperson to try to resolve workplace issues at the lowest level possible. But once you are notified that the school district intends to terminate your employment, the NSEA Legal Services Program and the NEA Kate Frank-DuShane Unified Legal Services Program ensure that any member threatened with termination will be assisted by an attorney from our Participating Attorneys in the Dyer Lawrence Law Firm *at no cost to the member.*

What if criminal charges are brought against me because of an occurrence on the job? NSEA has a panel of Participating Attorneys with a criminal defense practice to which we refer members who are under criminal investigation or who have had charges filed against them based on an incident involving their employment duties. NSEA pays for the first \$1,000 in fees and costs for these Participating Attorneys. Once the \$1,000 cap has been reached the member and the Participating Attorney must work out an arrangement for payment of remaining fees. Members may of course use their own attorneys in criminal situations, but in order to be eligible for the \$1,000 benefit, members must use one of our Participating Attorneys.

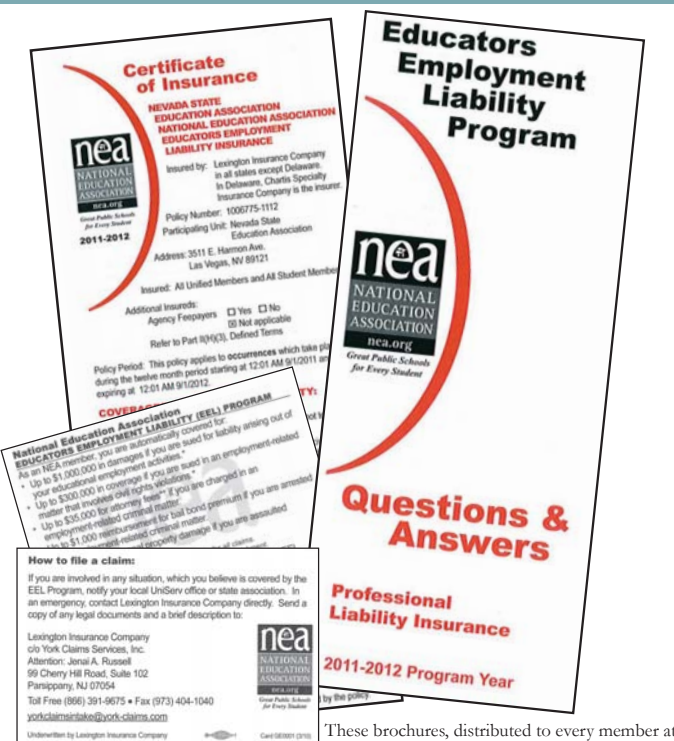
EEL Program (Insurance)

Why do I need liability coverage? In your work as an educator, you are frequently exposed to situations that may give rise to legal actions against the school district and you as an individual. If a student or a student's parents file a suit against you, NEA Educators Employment Liability Program (EEL Program) will provide you with insurance protection for the vast majority of cases. *As a member, you are covered by this EEL Program policy at no cost to you.*

What happens when I am sued for something I did on the job? In Nevada, school districts are the primary liability insurers, but if necessary, the EEL Program provides secondary, or excess, coverage of up to \$1,000,000 for the costs of defending *civil proceedings* brought against you in the course of your work as an educator and any damages assessed against you if you lose the case in court. Some activities are excluded, such as operating vehicles, but bus drivers are covered by their school district's liability insurance for such claims. Also note that the EEL Program does afford bus drivers additional coverage for any occurrence that happens while loading or unloading a bus.

Does the EEL Program provide any benefits if I am charged with a crime? Yes, the EEL Program policy will reimburse you for the attorney fees and other legal costs up to \$35,000 *if a criminal investigation is concluded without the filing of charges, any filed charges are dropped or you are exonerated in court.* In addition the EEL Program policy will reimburse you up to \$1,000 for bail premiums. These benefits are not dependent upon use of a Participating Attorney from NSEA's criminal defense panel; however, this benefit is only available for criminal proceedings arising out of your educational employment activities.

What if I suffer damage to my personal property as a result of an assault while on the job? The EEL Program policy covers you for this, and you can receive payment up to \$500 for this type of damage. Vehicles and school property are excluded.



These brochures, distributed to every member at the beginning of the school year, contain policy information.

Counselor's Connection: Senate Bill 276

Teachers as Mandated Reporters of Bullying

Katherine Loudon/ Counselor Coordinator

The week of October 1, 2011 has been declared by Governor Sandoval and our WCSD Board of Trustees as "A Week of Respect." The entire month of October is Bullying Prevention and Intervention month. Schools and teachers are being asked to incorporate respect and bullying prevention into **direct and embedded instruction**.

SB 276 became effective July 1, 2011. Senators Parks and Leslie supported the bill to ensure that we were creating schools where ALL of our students could learn in a safe and respectful environment.

Teachers are required by SB 276 to watch for bullying, intervene and report it to an administrator. It is the same process as mandated reporting for suspected child abuse. Too many cases involving bullied students were somehow not making it in front of administrators. Administrators are required to investigate reports, apply interventions, involve families and take school-wide action against school bullying and cyber bullying. Both administrators and teachers can be subject to disciplinary action under the new bill if they don't report and act.

Learn the differences between bullying and conflict. Ask your school counselor for assistance. When there is a suspected bullying case, report it to your administrator. If you are not sure whether or not to report a case, ask your administrator and refer to your school safety team or IAT for support. As educators, we always knew that listening to students, watching what is going on and taking action immediately were necessary to promote safety and respect in schools. We need to remain mindful that individuals at higher risk of being bullied are often students who are different from the majority of students. We must watch and advocate for students who are different from others.

Differences in race, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, mental, physical, and learning related abilities, weight, social behavior, and reactions to pressure and emotions such as anxiety and insecurity could lead to targeting by students who engage in bullying behavior.

How we can ensure that we are responding to bullying in a proactive way?

1. Supervise. It's a time-tested best practice strategy.
2. Make expectations and consequences clear.
3. Intervene immediately when you hear or see students disrespecting one another. Disrespect is a foundation for bullying. Tell students such things as, "calling other people names is disrespectful, call people by their real names." Your comments should be simple, fast and visible.
4. Protect honesty and anonymous student reporters.
5. Engage in class discussions and brainstorming sessions about respect, bullying and reporting.
6. A positive school climate = higher test scores. Where are your Tribes book and other school climate materials? Engage in teambuilding and other strategies to increase a positive classroom climate.
7. Teach direct and embedded social and emotional skills (www.casel.org).
8. Use Peer mentoring, SERVICE learning, conflict resolution/managers, and cooperative learning projects. Such activities are great for kids and help them connect to others and the school community.
9. Engage in empowerment. Bystanders can learn to report and intervene.
10. Use literature: it's a powerful teaching tool to combat disrespect and bullying.

SB 276 requires all teachers to be trained. Take your WCSD Safeschools online bullying class. Be sure to ask your administrator for more training if you need help addressing bullying and

disrespect. Use your school counselor and never hesitate to contact the district-level counseling office if you have other questions or need more support: **850-8011 or 850-8012**.

Helpful website for teachers and students:

<http://www.stopbullying.gov/index.html>

Lessons for teachers, video and more information:

www.flipthescriptnow.org

More for teachers, parents and students:

<http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/schools/safe-and-drug-free-schools/bullying--prevention-tips>

<http://www.washoe.k12.nv.us/schools/safe-and-drug-free-schools/cyberbullying-and-internet-safety-prevention-tips-and-resources>

Reporting

SOAP is a charting and reporting method borrowed from nursing and mental health. *SOAP is an adapted/suggested idea for you to record and keep track of information (nurses use symptoms for "S").*

- **Situation** - facts as reported by students/parents.
- **Observation** - other data, whatever else you see or hear.
- **Assessment** - Is it bullying or is it conflict? Ask your administrator or the IAT/safety team if you are unsure.
- **Plan** - If bullying is taking place, use interventions and report incidents to your administrator (PBIS works as an intervention framework). Refer to safety team/IAT, provide interventions, call parents, and refer to counselors. Administrators will refer to school police, and use community agencies.

When charting with SOAP, do not write what you think or feel; write only what you know. Keep it simple, and do not use clinical terms.

Administrators will have incident reporting forms that they will fill out.

Contract Corner: Social Media / WCSD “Rules of Acceptable Use”

Chuck Fletcher / UniServ Director

Many people are enjoying the ease of communication provided by various Social Media sites, e.g. Facebook, YouTube, blogs, Twitter, etc., but public employees must be clear in separating the distinct personal, family, student/parent, and professional roles. You are legally liable for what you post on your own site and on the sites of others. Individual bloggers have been held liable for commentary deemed to be proprietary, defamatory, libelous, obscene (as defined by the courts), and for educators/parents/students, when the post is deemed “disruptive” to the operation of the school.

The District currently has two documents that must be reviewed: One is “IT-P002 Acceptable Use Procedure,” specifically page 5 (“Social Media Sites, including personal site”), and the other is a document you have already signed: “IT-F003 Employee Network Rules of Acceptable Use.” The latter document establishes WCSD’s proprietary rights to the computers/equipment and the material stored on them as well as the employee’s waiver of “any right

of privacy.” These policies can be seen on the District website by searching “Policy and Regulations” by the alpha-numerical designation (e.g. “IT-F003”). The District is reviewing the legal issues currently surrounding social media and will be either editing these documents or adding a separate document in the not too distant future.

Considerations

There are stories in the media that are “hair-raising.” And then there are all of the personal stories that aren’t heard but still have a detrimental effect on relationships, families, jobs, and finances.

- Think (twice) about “online identity.” Is the material appropriate for family, students, friends, and colleagues? It is possible to restrict access or create separate sites. Is the identity “transparent” and accurate? Consider the amount of personal information on the site. Information that is too specific can aid scam artists and hackers. The “grandparent scam” is a current example.

- Could it be a violation of law, privacy or a “use” agreement? Employees especially need to consider violations

of FERPA. Is it respectful of copyright and intellectual property rights? The sites all have a “terms of service” agreement to consider. Only use logos and copyrighted materials with permission.

- Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. Once the picture or statement is on the website it has a life of its own. Posts are often forwarded or copied and could turn up years later in a search.

- Monitor posts to a personal site. “Friends” can put information or remarks that are not acceptable, and these can be removed, but the longer they remain the greater the potential damage.

- Strive for accuracy. Get the facts straight before posting. Review the content for grammatical and spelling errors.

- Photographs posted on social media sites easily can be appropriated by visitors. Consider adding a watermark and/or posting images at 72 dpi and approximately 800x600 resolution. Images at that size are sufficient for viewing on the Web, but not suitable for printing.

Nurse’s Notes: National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month

Sharon G. Freier / RN

Childhood obesity is a national epidemic: more than 23 million children and teenagers in the U.S. are obese or overweight. While obesity rates have soared among all age groups in this country, obesity is a particularly grave concern for children. In the past four decades, obesity rates in the United States have soared among all age groups.

This rise in obesity rates has affected our youth in alarming fashion. Childhood obesity has increased more than

fourfold among those ages 6 to 11. More than 23 million children and teenagers in the United States ages 2 to 19 are obese or overweight, a statistic that health and medical experts consider an epidemic. And this epidemic puts nearly one third of America’s children at early risk for Type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and even stroke – conditions usually associated with adulthood. Even greater disparities exist among young Hispanics and children of color.

Here are some FUN, health-promoting activities to do with your children

or students:

- Walk, run, skip a mile
- Play a game of football, soccer or your favorite sport
 - Host a family charity run/walk event
- Hold a jump-rope contest
- Tackle a ropes course
- Compete in a dance-off
- Play on the jungle gym
- Roller skate at a local rink
- Organize a bike-a-thon
- Take a martial arts lesson
- Climb a rock climbing wall

Welcome, New Members!

- **Alison Aker** at Pleasant Valley
- **Nicole Atkinson** at Cannan
- **Krystle Bailey** at Sparks Middle
- **Kristie Belding** at Depoali
- **Christa Bowman** at Dodson
- **Shawnmarie Chapman** at Galena
- **Krista Chiappini** at O'Brien
- **Nanette Chisum** at Dilworth
- **Patricia Constantino** at Galena
- **Marcus Culpepper** at Cold Springs
- **Megan Delossantos** at Lincoln Park
- **Jacque Doering** at Brown
- **Daryl Dunn** at Cold Springs
- **Jonah Ferrin** at Donner Springs
- **Susan Finn** at Cold Springs
- **Veronika Frazier** at Pleasant Valley
- **Linda Gillette-Koyen** at Sun Valley
- **Corbett Harrison** at Mendive
- **Briana Holbrook** at Depoali
- **Alisa Johnson** at Hunsberger
- **Kristen Koski** at Swope
- **Jessica Mack** at Dunn
- **Monique Madrid** at Diedrichsen
- **Kimberly Maldonado** at Mendive
- **Ada Massa-Gonzalez** at Dilworth
- **Nicolle Morrison** at O'Brien
- **Cindy Newcome** at Corbett
- **Mike Pacheco** at Dilworth
- **Kyle Peralta** at Reed
- **Eric Perez** at Sparks Middle
- **LaNiece Primus** at Dilworth
- **Stephanie Rossi** at O'Brien
- **Analorena Sanchez** at Duncan
- **Amy Sanders** at Huffaker
- **Andrea Schulewitch** at Wooster
- **Todd Simms** at Reed
- **Julie Spaulding** at Van Gorder
- **Lisa Taylor** at Stead
- **Karen Thomas** at Diedrichsen
- **Jennifer Walker** at Dilworth
- **Shinae Watterson** at Sparks Middle
- **Rhonda Wiese** at Sun Valley
- **Jessica Wilson** at O'Brien
- **Andrew Yoxsimer** at Reed

New Member Discounts at Reno/Sparks Businesses!

Bring your membership card to these generous local businesses and you'll be on your way to savings! Did you know, you can get a \$25 bonus for recruiting a new discount? Just download the Special Services Endorsement form in the "Helpful Resources" section of www.weatoday.org.

Mill Street Tire & Automotive Service

3180 Mill Street

\$15 Smog Test

Newman's Natural Carpet Care

Serving Sparks & Reno

Call (775) 626-5550

15% off all services

Clean carpet & upholstery, RV's, imported rugs, all area rugs, and autos!

Time to Go to the Movies!

Sharon G. Freier / RN

The new movie "Contagion" chronicles the rapid worldwide spread of a deadly airborne virus, the public health response to it, and the societal disruption that results. It strikes a balance between entertainment and accuracy. Moviegoers are expected to leave the movie recognizing public health as the hero the importance of public health preparedness. So come down to the WEA Office, buy some discount movie tickets (\$7.50ea, no restrictions) and go see it!



WASHOE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

**1890 Donald Street, Suite A
Reno, Nevada 89502
828-9282 Fax: 828-6748**

Dana Galvin	President
Jane Bantz	Vice-President
Elaine Lancaster	Executive Director
Chuck Fletcher	UniServ Director
Chelsea Canon	Office Manager



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WEA Today is published nine times per year to inform, educate and entertain the members of Washoe Education Association. We urge readers to write letters to the editor on matters of concern. Letters should be mailed to WEA Today Editor at 1890 Donald Street, Reno, NV. 89502. All letters must be signed and include phone number; however, anonymity will be granted if deemed necessary. We reserve the right to edit for length or libelous comments. It would be appreciated if letters were typed, but neatly handwritten copies are accepted.