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2018-2019 School Year, Quarter 3

Washoe Education Association Newsletter

IN THIS ISSUE....

- Substitute Shortage ...pg. 2
- Contract Corner: SLB ...pg. 2
- Quality Counts 2019 Ranking ...pg. 3
- Office Manager ...pg. 4
- Pre-Retirement Seminars ...pg. 4
- **Red4Ed** Rally ...pg. 5
- New Members .. pg. 6

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

February 4th

Opening of Nevada Legislature

November 7th, 14th, and 21st

WEA Pre-Retirement Seminars

February 18th

President's Day (WEA Office Closed)

Red4Ed Rally (NV Legislature)

March 13th

NBCT Reception

March 15th

WEA Award Nominations Due

March 25th - April 5th

Spring Break (WEA Office Closed March 25th to 29th)

April 5th - 6th

NSEA Delegate Assembly

April 15th

Evaluations Due

May 15th

Senior Recognition Day Reception

May 17th

WEA Awards Banquet (Atlantis)

The WEA website (WEAToday.org) is a great place to keep up on new events as well as our local business discounts.

120 Days to Make a Difference in Funding, Practices, and Morale.

Natha Anderson / WEA President

Members of the NV State Legislature began their 120 day session February 4. This 120 day session is all the time they have to consider the estimated 1200 Bill Drafts requested to help improve/protect our state. A bit over 10% of these bills could be tied to Education Funding and Education Policies which have an impact on our working conditions, students, and general professional morale.

The WEA and NSEA's priorities all have the underlying theme of RESPECT for our profession and our kids. Our top "six" items: School Funding; protecting public education; more learning, less testing; high quality educators to help every student succeed; member protection and school/work site safety. Governor Sisolak's State of the State address was a positive beginning for the discussions around these items.

During these legislative discussions, one of the most powerful items NSEA/WEA brings to the table is our member "first hand experience" voice. WEA/NSEA Government Relations Chair Phil Kaiser and I are both part of the Lobby Team so we often connect the policy idea to the realities of the classrooms and worksites. We know there are numerous other views about the issue. To help get some of these discussions started, WEA sponsored a successful Educators2Legislators class in January for members of the Lobby Team to hear from others. There are numerous other ways we will be asking for input from our members – though sponsoring different activities (for example the Red for Ed President's Day Rally mentioned in Phil Kaiser's and Mary Owens' articles), discussing issues with our Building Reps or asking for members to contact their Legislators. We are unable to send political emails to members through the District email system, however, you can email Earl Spriggs (WEA's office manager) with your personal email to get added to our Educator2Legislator for news alerts/updates.

With the session there are so many connections between bills being discussed and what is happening here in Washoe County School District. At times it is a balancing act of the Legislature's decisions and its impact on bargaining of the new contract, not to mention the staff/employee morale. We need to be involved, vigilant, and vocal during these next 120 days.

Substitute Teacher Shortage

Tom Stauss / WEA Executive Director

As you are aware, there is a substitute teacher shortage in WCSD, and it's directly impacting our educators, be it secondary educators having to give up their preparation periods, or elementary teachers having additional students placed in their classrooms to cover a class for a colleague who is absent.

Over the past year, we have had numerous discussions with WCSD regarding this issue and the impact it is having on our educators. We were pleased that on January 15th, WCSD's Human Resources Department made a presentation to the WCSD Board of Trustees to address this issue.

You might be interested in knowing that WCSD currently pays substitute teachers \$90 a day, but our sister districts pay \$103 a day (Clark County SD pays \$90 a day). Furthermore, WCSD pays substitute teachers \$105 a day on the 21st day of work, but our sister districts pay \$138 a day on the 21st day of work (Clark County SD pays \$100 a day).

Our understanding is that WCSD is attempting to address this issue, in part by increasing the rate of pay for substitute teachers. The focus will be on attempting to adjust the daily rate of pay for substitute teachers for the 2019-2020 school year, as well as possibly providing

some incentive pay to substitute teachers for the remainder of the 2018-2019 school year. While we do not believe this will resolve the issue completely, we do believe it is a step in the right direction, to provide some much needed relief for our educators. WCSD is also looking at other ways to improve the recruitment and retention of substitute teachers.

The WEA will continue to have conversations with WCSD regarding this issue in an effort to increase the number of substitute teachers in WCSD, and to reduce the number of times teachers have to give up their preparation periods.

Contract Corner: Sick Leave Bank Update

Chuck Fletcher / UniServ Director

A Little History

Over the last few years, the Sick Leave Bank (SLB) process has changed. It used to be that when the days in the SLB fell below a specific number, we did a "re-assessment" and to remain a participant in the SLB a form had to be signed. As our usage increased this became unrealistic and confusing. We changed to a process where once one signed on to participate in the SLB, one would stay a participant and have days deducted each year until the balance in the SLB at the end of the year was twice the usage of the previous year.

Good News

As our usage has declined a bit

in the last year or two, it appears that after the assessment in February we should have a balance at year's end that is twice the last end-of-year balance. We won't "know" this until July, but right now it looks good. It looks like we will not have to do an assessment next year (2019-20).

We are keeping the process where one can only join or drop the SLB during the first 5 weeks of the school year or one's employment with WCSD.

One question that often comes up is when a participant wants to use SLB days to care for a family member. When the SLB was created this was not allowed because it would be exponentially harder

for the District and WEA to manage the "risk" and the possibility that, with well over 4000 licensed educators, adding their family members could "break the bank." This creates many an agonizing moment for the office and the SLB Committee, but we need to stick to the Guidelines that govern our use. One of the other safeguards for the SLB is that approval is dependent upon a licensed physician's diagnosis/prognosis. This information must be updated to the SLB Board with the inability to work, so days are only approved on a monthly basis according to the payroll cycle.

WEA wants to be an effective steward of the days you donate.

Nevada Can't Be #1, if Our Schools Are # 50

Phil Kaiser / WEA Secretary

Education Week's annual state-by-state assessment, "Quality Counts 2019" was just released January 15, and it ranks Nevada 50th in the nation in the students' Chance for Success Index. "This index combines information from 13 indicators that span a person's life from cradle to career. Those indicators fall into three sub-sections: early foundations, school years, and adult outcomes."

- Early foundations: Nevada ranks 50th.
- School years: Nevada ranks 50th.
- Adult outcomes (post-secondary education and workforce indicators): Nevada ranks 47th.

Although former Governor Sandoval in 2017 provided additional categorical funding primarily for English Learners, low income, and students with special needs, Nevada still lags behind. Governor Sisolak has proposed additional funding for education. This is welcome, but the devil is in the details. Furthermore, funding does not directly address other issues, such as SLOs counting as 40% of teachers' evaluations, student-loads for counselors, speech pathologists, and teachers, excessive high-stakes testing (e.g., PSAT, ACT, EOC, MAP, etc.), insufficient numbers of nurses, and implementation issues related to Read-by-3 and other programs.

We need our voices heard by the policymakers in Carson City. Our first big opportunity for this will be the rally February 18 at 11:00 in Carson City. Bring your family, bring your friends. Nevada can't succeed without our schools succeeding.

You are invited to a Red for Ed Rally in our State Capitol

When: February 18, 2019

Time: 11:00-1:00 p.m.

Where: Nevada State Legislature
(401 S Carson St, Carson City, NV)

WEA/NSEA Legislative Priorities:

Smaller class size

Fund our schools

Improve school safety

Fewer tests and more teaching

Decrease caseloads for counselors & specialists



**Bussing and carpooling are currently being organized. Updated information can be found on the Washoe Education Association or Nevada State Education Facebook pages. You can also private message either organization with questions. **

Working for YOU!

Earl Spriggs / WEA Office Manager

Greetings and salutations WEA members! This is Earl Spriggs, your ever-ready Office Manger. I was recently asked about my various duties and the services I provide to you, the life-blood of the WEA and thought that you might be interested as well.

My first, and probably most important, duty is to maintain the member database. I am in constant contact with WCSD staff to keep our roster updated and accurate and continuously update the NSEA and NEA on any changes. Keeping up on top of dues deductions for our almost 2500 members ensures that we have the budget for our operations and that we receive back the proper amount of UniServ Grants from the NEA/NSEA.

I am also the first point of contact for, well pretty much everything. Maintaining and updating the website, answering or redirecting member questions, and even editing this newsletter are all aspects of WEA operations under my hat. This also includes being the person you contact or visit for our discounted tickets or other benefits, like our interest-free loans for National Board Certification.

Less exciting comes all the paperwork and organizational matters. From the groundwork for many of the events we hold annually, to staying on top of all incoming and outgoing bills, there are constant needs of members and staff that I am here to help with.

I have been with the WEA since August of 2016 and am honored and proud to support the staff here and the many members of the WEA. If there is every anything I can do to help you, please feel free to ask. You can call me at 775-393-2967 or e-mail at earl.spriggs@washoeschools.net.

PRE-RETIREMENT PROGRAMS FOR WEA MEMBERS ONLY

RSVP: 393-2967 or earl.spriggs@washoeschools.net

February 7th: ESIP| Health Insurance| Sick
Leave Buy-out

February 14th: PERS – Planning Ahead

February 21st: Social Security with Sandra Chapman, CFP

All meetings are conducted at the WEA Office, located at 1890 Donald Street in Reno.

Meetings begin at 4:15 and should conclude by 6:00.

Refreshments will be served.



The WEA Facebook page (www.facebook.com/WashoeEducationAssociation) is the best place to find up to date information on the WEA. Like and Follow us to stay informed about issues that impact you.

Red4Ed Rally

Mary Owens / WEA Special Services Director

Hello WEA Members, Be warned...I have an ask of you, but it will be something fun and very positive for education! Before that though, I would like you to know that all the work you do for education is very much appreciated by the WEA!

Our governor will likely be friendlier to public education! Good news! This did not happen by accident. WEA members helped make that happen: we canvassed, we wrote post-cards, walked in the NV Day Parade, made phone calls, and were visible. All that work payed off, but that was really just the start. Now, we need our WEA family and friends to step up again, to continue helping lawmakers to understand how important education is to the state of Nevada! So, here it comes... my ask: If you do anything extra for your profession and our brother and sisters in education this school year, make it the **RED FOR ED RALLY in Carson City at 11:00am in front of the NV State Legislature building in Carson City on Feb. 18th (President's Day).**

Right now, it is easy to be optimistic about our legislature and some Nevada politicians potentially making positive choices for education, but optimism is simply not going to be enough! Whether we

like it or not, politics greatly influences our careers. We need to prove our commitment to the families we serve, and help to improve the overall working environments of our profession. Is it fair that we have to do this on top of our already difficult jobs? NO! Is it completely necessary? YES! Therefore, I am asking you to bring yourself, your family, friends and neighbors that care about public education to spend just two hours supporting it. There is no better feeling than being a part of a group of people that believe as you do, and are willing to stand up and unapologetically speak up for what is right. So here is my ask again, please come to the **RED FOR ED RALLY in Carson City at 11:00am in front of the NV State Legislature building on Feb. 18th (President's Day).**

We deserve the best environments for students and school staff, a cost of living raise, lower class sizes, fully funded schools, improved school safety, decreased caseloads for counselors and specialists, and more relevant evaluations. You can help make that happen! Join us for the **RED FOR ED RALLY in Carson City at 11:00am in front of the NV State Legislature building on Feb. 18th (President's Day).**

We will make the journey to Carson City for the **RED FOR ED RALLY at 11:00am in front of the NV State Legislature building on Feb. 18th (President's Day)** as easy as possible. We are currently working on having transportation options available for those who want to attend, but not drive themselves. If you would like any more information about the **RED FOR ED RALLY at 11:00am in front of the NV State Legislature building on Feb. 18th (President's Day)**, please contact the WEA office directly at (775) 828-9282 or a board member listed on the WEA poster located on your WEA bulletin board at school.

Thank you so much for reading, and allowing me to rant just a wee bit! (I am rather good at it, just ask my husband about how I am while watching the political news). **This is so very important, and we need as many people as possible to attend to be part of the ocean of Red!** Let us show the Nevada politicians and the public we serve how important we know education is for our students and our state!

RED FOR ED RALLY at 11:00am in front of the NV State Legislature building on Feb. 18th (President's Day)!

Retirement and Awards Banquet: A Celebration of Our Profession

Our annual Retirement and Awards Banquet will be held in a different location and earlier this year. We'll be celebrating May 17 at the Atlantis so please mark your calendar. We have different categories of areas of Member Award Recognition (Devoted, Dedicated and Distinguished) as well as community nominations. Information can be found on our website (<http://www.weatoday.org/2019-wea-award-nominations/>) if you would like to recognize a fellow educator or business. If you know of a member who is planning on retiring this year – please let us know so we can make sure he/she is invited (along with a guest) to the May 17 event. More information (such as the official theme) will be coming over the next few months.

Welcome, New Members!

Eileen Lyon
Alice Smith

Chris Coleman
Anderson

Vera Adams
Bennett

Desiree Burdick
Bennett

Lindsay Jandreau
Bennett

Vicki Johnson
Bennett

Shelly Kindness
Bennett

Kimber Loyd
Bennett

Ashley Oliveira
Bennett

Amanda McNamara
Billinghurst

Maxwell McLaughlin
Clayton

Rebecca Marin
Damonte Ranch

Kendra Cherba
Depoali

Darci Cummings
Depoali

Brittney Peterson
Double Diamond

Katrena Adnrst
Duncan

Roberta McCullough
Duncan

William Hauser
Galena

Travis Ryness
Huffaker

Stephanie Conroy
Incline ES

Rebecca Fromherz
Incline ES

Sharisse Crowe
Lemmon Valley

Kenneth Lee
Mendive

Jessica Grant
Mitchell

Kathryn Brown
North Valleys

Brandt Butko
North Valleys

Fauna Pettit
North Valleys

Chad Brown
O'Brien

Janet Helmar
Palmer

Hannah Jenkins
Palmer

Victoria Wilds
Risley

Erik Graf
Shaw

Stephanie Reynolds
Shaw

Patricia Hudson
Spanish Springs ES

Nichole Lontz
Spanish Springs HS

Dominic Green
Sparks HS

Heather Mcevoy
Sparks HS

Cathleen Crook Tirona
Sparks MS

Kourtney Kins
Sun Valley

Jodie Westmont
Sun Valley

Reid Johnson
Vaughn

Kessandra Lee
Vaughn

Douglass McGoff
Vaughn

Margaret Repko
Vaughn

Nichole Von Dem Bussche
Winnemucca

Deann Sheffield
Wooster

Since the end of the 2017-2018 school year 239 New Members have joined the WEA!



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Natha Anderson	President
Frances McGregor	Vice-President
Thomas Stauss	Executive Director
Chuck Fletcher	UniServ Director
Earl Spriggs	Office Manager



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WEA Today is published four 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.

In the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 the miscellaneous itemized deduction, including tax-deductions for tax-preparation fees, investment expenses, **union dues**, and unreimbursed employee expenses was eliminated.

Due to this change, starting with the 2018 year, you are no longer able to deduct your dues expenses.