



Washoe Education Association Newsletter

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- February 17th, 24th (4:15pm)**
Pre-Retirement Programs (Virtual)
- February 21st**
President's Day
- March 2nd**
Building Rep Council
- March 11th**
End of Grading Period
- March 14th-25th**
Spring Break
WEA Office Closed March 21-25
- March 30th**
Know Your Contract Virtual Training
- April 1st-3rd**
NSEA Delegate Assembly
- April 6th**
Building Rep Council
- April 13th**
NBCT Reception
- April 18th**
Evaluations Due
- May 1st**
Letters of Intent
- May 6th**
Awards Banquet, GSR

Working to the Rule of the Contract

Summer Kay / WEA Executive Director

Maintaining a healthy work-life balance is more important than ever in the education field. Many of our members have asked, "Can I work to the rule of the contract?" The answer is yes, with some noted exceptions below. It's important to remember no one can require you to work past your 7 hour or 7 1/2 hour day without compensation except in the circumstances outlined below.

Article 7.1 - Both parties understand and agree on the importance of the uninterrupted flow of the education process. Because of the significance that is attached to the continuous flow of work, the parties hereby agree that nothing shall be done to reduce, slow, or in any way inhibit the flow of the District's business for the duration of the Agreement.

This means all the job requirements must be fulfilled. No sick outs, lock outs, strikes, or other work stoppages will be organized by either WEA or WCSD.

Article 18.1 - Secondary teachers shall have a seven and half (7.5) hour contract day. Secondary teachers shall be required to report no earlier than fifteen (15) minutes before the start of the employee's first scheduled class period (including preparation periods).

The start and end time for nurses will be based on the schoolsite/ assignment of the individual nurse, based on a 7 1/2 hour contract day.

Continued on next page



The WEA Facebook page (www.facebook.com/WashoeEducation-Association) 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.

Working to the Rule of the Contract

Elementary teachers shall have a seven (7) hour contract day, in recognition of the fact that they do not have a scheduled preparation period during the instructional (student) day. Elementary teachers (and itinerant educators assigned to elementary schools) shall report to school no more than thirty (30) minutes before the start of the instructional (student) day. The elementary duty day shall conclude no more than thirty minutes after the instructional (student) day (with the exception of multi-track year-round). Any deviation from the instructional (student) day must be included in the School Improvement Plan and approved by the Area Superintendent. To allow for greater access for parental contact, no duty shall be assigned prior to fifteen (15) minutes before the instructional (student) day, except with the consent of the teacher. Faculty meetings may commence earlier than fifteen (15) minutes prior to the start of school (contract day) based on a 2/3's vote of the entire faculty.

For purpose of this article, contract day means the number of hours that a teacher is contracted to work each day—elementary teachers are contracted to work a 7-hour day and secondary teachers are contracted to work a 7.5-hour day. Instructional (student) day means the period from when the first school bell rings until the last school bell rings. (2019)

This means secondary teachers (7-12) report no more than 15 minutes prior to the first bell. Elementary teachers report no more than a half hour prior to the first bell and stay no longer than a half hour after the final bell. If administration wishes to hold a faculty meeting more than 15 minutes prior to the first bell, there must be a 2/3 affirmative vote of the entire

faculty to do so.

Article 18.2 - Employees may be required to remain after completion of the school day without additional compensation within the following limits:

18.2.1 When it is necessary to remain longer to attend general faculty meetings and special meetings when called by the Superintendent, the school principal, or other administrative officers. This includes the parent open house and graduation exercises. Teachers will be dismissed no later than 15 minutes after the end of the student day on these two occasions. All duties at graduation exercises shall be filled by volunteers. Should an administrator believe that he/she doesn't have a sufficient number of volunteers, duties shall be assigned on a rotating basis.

18.2.2 Employees are expected to be available to parents for scheduled consultations after completion of the regular school day. The responsibility of the employee to be available for conferences with parents is recognized as an employee's professional responsibility and shall be encouraged by the Association. Every reasonable effort shall be made to schedule parent conferences at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance except in emergency situations.

18.2.3 The principal shall have the authority to permit divergence by employees from the regular school day.

18.2.4 Employees shall continue the tradition of voluntary participation in parent-teacher activities.

This means one can be required to stay longer for faculty meetings (on a limited basis) or special meetings, parent open house, and graduation. Teachers are generally expected to be available to parents but note the contract language

which indicates 24 hours response time is acceptable. The principal can offer exceptions to language in this article if the teacher has a verifiable emergency. Article 18.2.4 does not mean every teacher must be available for every after-hours activity. Work with your building administration to create a rotation of certified staff who are available for all the extra activities occurring after hours. For example, two out of the four second grade teachers could staff the second grade STEM night table and the other two second grade teachers could staff Family Reading Night activities the next month.

Article 18.3 – The principal, working with his/her staff or a committee elected by the staff, shall determine and assign such duties as bus, yard, hall, and other extracurricular assignments. These duties shall be considered as part of the professional responsibility of the employee.

18.3.1 The District will provide each elementary school with resources to reduce teachers' non-instruction duties.

This means the principal should be working with their staff or a committee of staff members who assist with duty assignments to ensure they are equitable. If this is not happening at your school, step up to volunteer to be part of the group that assists in informing these decisions. This article also provides for additional resources which can be utilized at the elementary level. Often times this would mean additional staff, which we understand is difficult in these times.

Article 18.8 – When teachers are required to attend an IEP meeting, every reasonable effort will be made

Working to the Rule of the Contract

to limit the time a teacher is required to work beyond the end of the teacher's workday. (2013)

IEP meetings are necessary professional responsibilities. Every reasonable effort should mean those who schedule IEPs should be looking for availability during contract hours to schedule IEP meetings,

making after hours requirements a rare occurrence. At the secondary level, the same English (or other subject area) teacher should not be always covering IEP meetings. Rotation schedules can be utilized to reduce the frequency of attending after hours IEP meetings.

In short, the answer is yes, one

can regularly work to the hour rule of the contract with a few exceptions as noted above. Administrators have the option to be flexible, as stated in the contract language, and staff have the option to equalize the professional responsibilities, so everyone contributes to lightening the workload.

Student Loan Forgiveness Seminar Summary

Elizabeth Cadigan / WEA Board Member

On January 19th, the WEA co-hosted a presentation with NEA Member Benefits titled "Debt Solutions: Erasing Student Loan Debt." During this presentation, over 75 members were given a brief description of the new rules per-

taining to the PSLF Waiver Opportunity and which loans may be eligible for forgiveness. Participants also learned about a new service that members can use to navigate the student loan forgiveness process called Savi. As a member of the WEA, Savi is available for free for the first year and at a reduced rate

of \$29 thereafter. For members who were not able to attend the presentation but would like more information on how Savi can help them successfully navigate the student loan forgiveness process, please e-mail Antonio Galindo at agalindo@neamb.com.

2022 WEA Scholarships Are Open

The 2022 WEA Scholarships have been announced. Applications for the scholarships can be found on the WEA website, weatoday.org, under "Resources".

- The Michael Landsberry Memorial Scholarship, for \$1,000, is awarded to a high school senior who plans on attending a 2-4 year college or vocational school. The applicant must have attended Sparks Middle School in 7th & 8th grade.
- The Ernie Johnson Vocational Scholarship, for \$1,000, is awarded to a high school senior who plans on attending a two-year college or vocational school. The applicant must be the child of a WEA member.
- The Marilyn Owen Academic Scholarship, for \$1,000, is awarded to a high school senior who will be attending a four-year college or university. The applicant must be the child of a WEA member.
- The Kathy Powell/Thelma Davila Scholarship, for \$1,000, is awarded to a high school senior of Hispanic descent who has an interest in pursuing a career in education.
- The Lancaster Family Memorial Scholarship, for \$2,000, is awarded to a high school senior or college student who is pursuing a career in elementary education. The applicant must be a child of a WEA member.
- The Gladys Hamm Scholarship for \$1,000, is awarded to a female high school senior at Reed, Sparks, or Spanish Springs high schools who will be attending a four-year college or university.

Seven Deadly Sins

Heath Merchen / Associate General Counsel, Oklahoma Education Association

We, the state attorneys who represent members of the National Education Association (NEA), love a good fight. In fact, we have an impressive win record in board hearings, trials and appeals. So when clients who have been sexually harassed, wrongfully terminated or denied wages, we take careful notes and fight the good fight on their behalf.

Sometimes, however, clients bring us stories that aren't going to end well – where there is no argument to be made and our client isn't on the side of truth and justice. IN those cases, the most we can do is point out the error of their ways and hand them a Kleenex.

Public school educators are tops in my book. But in hopes of avoiding even one sad story, I've listed out the "seven deadly sins" of school employees that leaves us in a spot where we really can't help. All are completely avoidable, completely within the employee's control, and just should not happen - -but, unfortunately, they sometimes do.

Sin: Walking off the Job.

Grieve (after complying) – don't leave. The only exception is fleeing from an immediate physical threat. Otherwise, stay on the job and call us afterward about your concern. If you walk off the job, it is the same as quitting.

Sin: Quitting before you talk to us

This is similar to walking off the job. Using the "I'm going to hold my breath 'til my face turns blue" approach never works. Too many employees say "I quit" expecting their employers to recognize how indispensable they are. While the employee usually ends up apologizing and begging their supervisor for permission to stay, the employee instead hears in blunt terms "Resignation accepted." If you quit, you will lose any right to sue, any right to a board hearing, and any chance at unemployment compensation except in extreme cases involving harassment or discrimination.

Sin: Ignoring substance abuse

Substance abuse is a serious issue, and denial of its existence can lead to a very bad place, including criminal offenses that can get you fired. Telling an arresting officer you just drank a bunch of cough syrup before getting behind the wheel won't fly. (As a side note, coming to your attorney's office with liquor on your breath is also more than a bit of a no-no – I will take your keys.) If you have a drug or alcohol problem, get help. If you seek treatment, it is likely that your Association can get the district to provide you with appropriate leave time and even help you enroll in a recovery program. Be honest and ask for help. In return, we will do everything we can to get you the assistance you need.

Sin: Using computers for any personal use

Please do not use school computers for personal use. Your district knows everything you've looked at, down to the nanosecond, and they have the computer records to prove it. You will get fired.

Sin: Leaving students unsupervised

Indefensible. When you walk away, something bad will happen, (little Billie will somehow blind Sally with a paperclip), and it will be entirely your fault. I understand the "need to use the bathroom" defense. Sadly, that won't help. Someone must supervise students during even a quick bathroom break (secretary, paraprofessional, even a custodian). Having someone "watch" from the next room isn't enough. The number one job of a teacher is to supervise student, no exceptions.

Sin: Texting/emailing suggestive jokes to students

Do not communicate with students in any way other than a professional manner. When the communication involves anything suggestive, your employer has to presume the worst (i.e., sexually involved) and will terminate you. If an allegation of inappropriate contact is made, no matter how false, but the evidence shows sexually oriented jokes were exchanged via text or email, it can result in both termination and criminal charges. Stick to contacting them about assignments, school notices, or general academic encouragement.

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Delegate and Representative Assemblies

Mary Owens / WEA Board Member, Elections Committee Chair

Hello Potential Future Delegate and Representative Assembly Members!

If you've listened to any of my election reports, you've likely heard me quote one of my all-time favorite movies (Forrest Gump) and asked for members to, "Run Members Run"! I want to tell you why I use that phrase and consider these meetings such an important part of the work done by the WEA! Being a delegate to one or both meetings is:

- a way to get more involved!
- a way to help make decisions within your state and national associations!
- a way to network and make friends with those who want what is best for teachers, students, their families, and education!
- an interesting, educational, and fun way to make a difference!
- cost effective, because the WEA will pay for your registration and parts of your stay (including transportation)!

Here is information on both our state and national meetings:

Delegate Assembly (DA) – Nevada State Education Association (NSEA)

Our Delegate Assembly occurs every other year, and we accept nominations and hold elections the first part of January. This year the state meeting will be in Elko April 1-3. Delegates from across the state, representing WEA, WESP, rural associations (UniServ Council of Nevada), and education support professionals (ESEA) and NEA-Southern Nevada will meet to discuss proposed policies, bylaws, and new business items. In addition, this year, the Delegate Assembly will elect our Nevada State Education Association officers: President and Vice President. That's a big deal! ***This year's delegates have already been elected, but if this sounds interesting and amazing to you, please consider running in the future for the next meeting in 2024!***

Link to the NSEA website with additional information:

<https://www.nsea-nv.org/professional-excellence/conferences-events/nsea-delegate-assembly>

Representative Assembly (RA) – National Education Association (NEA)

The Representative Assembly (RA) is the annual meeting of the NEA, and this year the meeting will be in Chicago at the beginning of July for about 5 days. Representative from across the country will debate policies, bylaws, and new business items. Elections for RA will be in February and the nominations will open at Rep Council on February 2nd and are due the following Monday. Please consider running, especially if you have never been fortunate to go. Words just can't describe how amazing it is to be working around approximately 8,000 teachers from all over the country in one place! ***Nominations for the 2022 RA have closed, but opportunities may still exist if you are interested. Contact Earl Spriggs or Phil Kaiser for more details.*** Link to the NEA website with additional information:

<https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/conferences-events/annual-meeting-and-representative-assembly>

So, please... ***“Run (insert your name here), Run!”*** when the opportunity next presents itself! If you have any additional questions, please reach out to a WEA board member or call the WEA office at (775) 828.9282. Thanks for all you do for the education of children in Washoe County!



WE Are in This Together!

Susan Kaiser / WREA President

You may retire from your role in the public school but voices advocating for education must never fade away. Your membership in Washoe Retired Education Association (WREA) allows your advocacy to continue. We are the retired public-school employees who are the daytime voice in the Nevada Legislature when it is in session. We speak up on behalf of active educators and for the benefits due to public school employees when they retire. We stay involved in our community awarding scholarships to early educators, holding food drives, and creating social events

for weary active educators and our members. Our benefits include extending your liability insurance if you intend to substitute as a retiree. JOIN US! You can join do it NOW, before you retire.

See what we are about at www.washoeretirededucation@weebly.com then contact our Membership Chair, Fran McGregor at 775-544-3644 with questions about joining our group.

In solidarity!



2022 WEA Awards Banquet

After a two year hiatus, the WEA is planning on holding our Awards Banquet on May 6th at the Grand Sierra Resort. Award nominations are open now through March 9th.

Devoted Service Award

To be a candidate for this award, an individual must have been serving as a devoted educator for 20 or more years.

Dedicated Service Award

To be a candidate for this award, an individual must have been serving as a dedicated educator for 10 or more years.

Distinguished Performance Award

This award is given to licensed

person who have done an outstanding and exemplary job in their field and must have been serving as a distinguished educator for 5 or more years.

Association Leadership Award

The purpose of this award is to honor a member of our Association who has distinguished themselves through tireless effort, long hours and creative labor, for the benefit of the educators of Washoe County.

Improvement to Education (Group or Individual) Award

These annual awards are presented to a group or individual who are not eligible to be members of WEA, but have contributed to the quality of education and/

or betterment of the lives of the children of Washoe County.

Service to WEA Award

This award is designed to honor those individuals who receive little or no recognition for a job well done in service to educators and the Washoe Education Association.

Further details on the awards as well as the nomination form can be found on the WEA website.

Another key aspect of the banquet is our recognition of the service of our retiring members. If you, or someone you know is retiring this spring or has retired this school year, please let Earl Spriggs know so that we can be sure to include them in the celebrations.

Seven Deadly Sins, continued

Sin: Calling in sick then posting pictures of yourself at the lake, mall, or Disneyland on Facebook

Ah, my favorite. The employee musters up their raspiest voice, throws in some hacking coughs for good measure, and then leaves a pained message on the school's answering machine about how they are too sick to come in. All spoken via cell while in a swimming suit floating on the lake, beer in hand. How do we know? Because the employee had their buddy take a picture with his iPhone and post it to Facebook, commenting "Great sick day at the lake!" Once again, here's your Kleenex and best of luck in your next career.

The bottom line? Think before you act. Or, at the very least, call your regional advocacy specialist before you act, so we can help.

WEA Members Running for Public Office

Selena La Rue Hatch is teacher at North Valleys High School and currently serves as Co-Chair of the NSEA Grassroots Taskforce and as the High School Director on the WEA board of directors. She has spent her nearly decade long career advocating for our students and our schools and we are so excited to see her take that fight to the Nevada Legislature. You may have seen her fiery public comments at WCSD Board meetings and the legislature, or you may have heard her leading the chants on her megaphone at our Red for Ed rallies. Where there is a fight for education, Selena is there. Now she is running for Assembly District 25 and we could not be more supportive! Here is what Selena had to say about her run:

"Every two years, our leaders promise to fix our education system, but as someone who is in the classroom, I can tell you, I don't see the fixes happening. I have written letters, I have lobbied elected members of the Legislature, and yet, somehow nothing changes. That's why we need more teachers in the room making decisions. We cannot continue to accept the status quo. We cannot stand by while another generation of Nevadans is left behind by our broken school system.

As a teacher, a parent, and a public education advocate, I have spent my life serving my community and creating positive change around me. Now, I am stepping up my commitment to my community by running for the Nevada State Assembly in District 25. I want to ensure the voices of everyone in our community, including our BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities, are heard and honored in the halls of power. Together, we can raise our voices and make real and powerful changes for our children, our community, and the people of Nevada. With courage,

honesty, and a willingness to try something new, a brighter Nevada is possible, and I am committing all of my energies to ensure that it becomes a reality."

Past President, Natha Anderson, is running for Re-election in District 30. During her first session she was a strong voice for education. She sponsored bills that require more diverse resources for students and that provide new opportunities for college education to Nevada's Native-Americans. Natha has taught at Reed High, Vaughn Middle, and North Valleys High Schools.

The WEA has chosen to endorse Selena and Natha in their campaigns. Electing legislators who understand the importance of education is the key step in creating lasting education change in our state.



Welcome, New Members!

Bernardo Aguilar

Sparks HS

Melinda Bower

McQueen

Lisa Brauner

North Valleys

Angela Brown

Vaughn

Sean Buscher

Elmcrest

Edgar Ceja Soto

Traner

Aaron Cook

Galena

Constance Davis-

Jukes

Pleasant Valley

Rebecca Dixon

Depoali

Maria Flores

Donner Springs

Jessica Gil

Bennett

Jack Green

Gomm

Elizabeth Harrell

Incline MS

William Herron

Wooster

Kari Hyland

Incline HS

Jennifer Jango-Cohen

Incline MS

Toni Kane

Corbett

Jane Knipmeyer

Pine

Caitlyn Knobbe

Dilworth

Mariel LeCuyer

O'Brien

Jasmin Magana-Cheeks

Dilworth

Micheal Mendiville

Winnemucca

Anne Mirch

North Star

Michelle Panelli

Mount Rose

Megan Potter

Bohach

Tara Purinton

Incline ES

Christopher Romine

Dilworth

Brenda Serafin-Walcher

Sun Valley

Erin Shearin

Galena

David Snearly

Incline MS

Schelbea Vrooman

Wooster

Christopher Young

North Valleys



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weatoday.org

WEA Today is published three 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.

renotype 

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