



Washoe Education Association Monthly Newsletter

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MARK YOUR CALENDAR

February 1st

Nominations Open for RA
Delegates

February 9th

Nominations Close for RA
Delegates

February 20th

Presidents' Day
WEA Office Closed

March 7th

Rep Council
4:30pm in the WEA Office

April 4th

Rep Council
4:30pm in the WEA Office

April 4th

Nominations Open for WEA
Board of Directors Positions

April 19th

Nominations Close for WEA
Board of Directors Positions

April 9th - 13th

Spring Break
WEA Office Closed

May 2nd

Rep Council
4:30pm in the WEA Office

May 18th

WEA Awards Banquet
5:00pm at The Peppermill

WEA WINS ARBITRATION

Dana Galvin / WEA President

On January 20th a decision was handed down by the arbitrator, Charles Askin. The award was in our favor!

AWARD

“Based on the District’s ability to pay and the Arbitrator’s consideration of normal criteria for interest arbitration disputes, it is concluded that the Association’s proposal is more reasonable than the District’s proposal in this impasse. Accordingly, there will be no change in the current salary schedule as of July 1, 2011. The contract will be extended through July 1, 2013, except that either party may reopen negotiations on salary only for FY 2012-2013.”

In his opinion, “it is undisputed that the District has the ability to pay for the Association’s proposal that the current salary schedule be retained for fiscal year 2011-2012. The District stipulated that it has the ability to pay, and the evidence in this record supports that stipulation.”

Much of the district’s case was based on the premise that if the other employee groups agreed to the cuts, it was the WEA’s obligation to do likewise. In the opinion of the arbitrator, “it cannot be seriously disputed that there are significant

differences in the duties of WEA members (e.g. teaching classes of children at all levels) compared with professional and technical administrators, principals, police officers, and a wide variety of unrepresented employee classifications. There are likewise major differences in the education and licensing requirements to perform teaching, library, nursing, physical therapy, counseling, and other duties performed by members of this bargaining unit as compared with police officers’ education, administrators’ education, and principals’ education and licensing. Finally, and of particular pertinence to this wage dispute, there are significant differences in the salary schedules within the District for teachers as compared to administrators, principals, police officers - indeed, most, if not all, of the other employee groups employed by the District.”

The WEA presented documentation that no other district in Nevada had asked for salary cuts (only freezes) and that in fact, some districts actually got raises. Mr. Askin agreed: “The District proposes that the salary of WEA members be reduced by 2.5% for two consecutive years, for a cumulative reduction of 5%, at a time when no other similarly-situated teacher unit has

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Counselor's Connection: The Importance of Career Centers and Career Center Facilitators

Katherine Loudon & Bryan Hakanson

Research has shown that a student's future focus on careers can make the difference between a student that stays engaged in school and one that drops out.

All teachers should include career research in classroom activities and lessons. It's a state standard in most subjects; more importantly, it improves student engagement. Knowing how education can increase career opportunities can help motivate your students. This month's *WEA Today* "Counselor's Connection" article is focused on high school career centers and career center facilitators.

Each high school career center, located within your school, has a career facilitator waiting for you and your students. Career centers help students unlock their talents and open new doors to opportunities. Every classroom subject is associated with a possible career, so why not take your students to the career center to do some research? This may be the key to help students understand why they need to learn about the specific subject that you teach.

The career center is a valuable resource and can be used as an instructional tool. A career facilitator is there to help students and parents find their way through the difficult challenges involved in exploring careers, navigating the college acceptance process and finding money to pay for school; however, an often unrecognized part of a career facilitator's job is to help teachers.

There is something in the career center for every student. Career centers offer numerous opportunities for career exploration. Each resource center has

access to the Nevada Career Information System, or NCIS (<http://nvcis.intocareers.org/>). NCIS is sponsored, maintained and updated by the State of Nevada. This program is free and allows students to access career information and activities. The NCIS "Occupational Sort" is an interest inventory that provides a series of questions. Each question is related to job skills or job environments. The interest inventory can help students determine which job would suit them best. NCIS also gives students insight into the required education for each job and job prospects. The NCIS system includes fun activities such as the "Reality Check." This activity requires students to answer a series of questions about their desired standard of living. From this activity, students learn how much money they will need to earn to support their desired lifestyle. It really is a "reality check." Students are often surprised that living on their own requires more than they expected. NCIS is just one example of computer based programs that help students explore careers. Additionally, career centers still have the traditional hard back book resources for career exploration.

Transitioning from high school to college is one of the most challenging rites of passages for students and parents. Students need to be conscious of the types of classes they take, their grades, standardized test scores and the college application process. Career center facilitators have access to information about most colleges. Applying for colleges can be one of the most important and daunting tasks that a student will encounter in high school. Each student should pick at least three colleges that they want to investigate. Colleges have

different entrance requirements, so it's important to do research. Knowing the entrance requirements and the cost are probably the best place to start. Career center facilitators have this information at their fingertips. Why not give your students credit for career exploration and completion of scholarships?

Career center facilitators can help students find scholarships and access scholarship applications. They can even help students complete scholarship applications and send the application off for consideration. Scholarships are not the only way to pay for college. Each student should complete FAFSA. This is the application for federal student loans. This application can also help students qualify for free money for college. When students complete the FAFSA, they will automatically be considered for federal grants. Colleges use Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) information to determine college specific scholarships. Seniors should complete FAFSA by the beginning of the second semester. Every student should complete the FAFSA application. Career center facilitators can help students through the process (<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>).

Teachers are encouraged to utilize the centers and facilitators to connect subjects to careers. This connection increases relevancy and will contribute to student engagement. So, visit your high school career center today and introduce yourself to your career facilitator. They will be happy to see you. Spring is just around the corner, so help your students prepare to be college and career ready.

Every child by name and face to graduation - college and/or career ready.

Calendar - Bell/Bus - Evaluations - Culture of Respect

Arbitration Award, Continued

....continued from front page

accepted such a significant reduction. On the contrary, during the same year(s) at issue herein, the evidence establishes that the 'prevailing practice' for the units most similarly situated to the WEA unit has been a freeze on salaries - the same proposal made by WEA in this case. In addition, the evidence shows that the adoption of the District's proposal will have significant, adverse impact upon the comparative ranking of WEA members among their peers."

Through this entire proceeding, the district never disputed their ability to pay. Their focus was on the other employee groups and the financial future beyond the life of this contract. Our focus was the district's ability to pay, and the fact that in the past all employee groups have not been treated the same. We also pointed out that just because those groups chose to settle before an ending fund balance and audit was established, that WEA should not be penalized for doing our job on behalf of our members.

If this salary cut had gone through, WCSD teachers would have fallen back to 2007 pay levels, people would have had to pay back the district for the first 6 months of the year. Over 1/3 of certified staff is at the end of the salary schedule, and the amount lost for them would have been \$4,000.

There is a "reopener" clause in the decision that allows either party to re-open negotiations for salaries only, for the 12-13 school year. We will not be re-opening.

Elaine Lancaster / Executive Director

The **Calendar Committee** met for a final time on January 10th. The district survey, which we hope all of you responded to, was completed on the 25th. The district will compile the information and present the final plan to the Trustees in late February, to take effect in the 13-14 school year. The only decision is whether to start the school year on August 5th or August 12th. Both calendars have the first semester ending before winter break and allow for credit recovery, remediation and enrichment during the weeks in October, December and March/April.

The **Bell/Bus Committee** meeting was cancelled on January 12th and another meeting has not been rescheduled.

The **Evaluation Committee** met on January 10th and 31st. We have been working on finalizing the details of the

evaluation that is currently being used by the 9 TIF/SIG schools and the other 8 pilot schools. We are working out the details of how each component will be scored, ensuring inter-rater reliability. It is planned that the evaluation will be used district wide next year, with folks being held harmless for the first year.

The Culture of Respect Committee met on January 19th to finalize the Culture of Respect Resolution. It has changed from a policy/regulation to a resolution, that will be presented to the Trustees on February 14th. It has also changed dramatically in tone and no longer requires the signatures of the various associations. The plan is to possibly offer some type of in-service centered around Dealing With Difficult People, Conflict Resolutions, etc.

All of these issues are on-going. We will keep you informed and up to date on their progress.

Role of the WEA Rep

Chuck Fletcher / UniServ Director

Our building reps are extremely important to the functioning of the WEA or any labor organization, but for some workplace issues in Washoe County School District, WEA staff is whom you should call.

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For instance, WEA recommends that for issues with Testing Violations, Evaluation issues, Track III, all disciplinary issues with an "Investigatory/Due Process" meeting, or issues

involving the WCSD Police, your call should be to WEA at 828-9282.

It is much better for WEA staff to be involved as early as possible in these situations.

WEA relies on building reps to share information, pass out informative literature, and be a resource for our members. However, they are very busy with teaching issues, but don't have the training or expertise of the WEA staff.

Nurse's Notes: Affordable Care Act Helps 2.5 Million Young Adults Get Health Insurance

Sharon G. Freier / RN

Expanded coverage from the health care law has continued to grow. The National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released data illustrating that the Affordable Care Act continues to significantly increase the number of young adults who have health insurance.

Because of the health care law, young adults can stay on their parents' insurance plans through age 26. This policy took effect in September 2010. Data from the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) shows that since September 2010, the percentage of adults aged 19-25 covered by a private health insurance plan increased significantly, with approximately 2.5 million more young adults with insurance coverage compared to the number of young adults who would have been insured without the law.

"Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, 2.5 million more young adults don't have to live with the fear and uncertainty of going without health insurance," said Secretary Kathleen Sebelius. "Moms and dads around the country can breathe a little easier knowing their children are covered."

Families around the country are benefiting from this part of the law, including families like the Houghs, whose daughter Natalie was diagnosed with a rare heart condition after suffering a cardiac arrest at school. Her condition requires a lifetime of medication and care. There was a day when this diagnosis would mean insurance companies would either not cover Natalie or would offer her unaffordable plans. It would mean that Natalie and her family

would have to keep paying, or face the unimaginable alternative. Thanks to the Affordable Care Act, Natalie can stay on her family's plan and has started college, and thanks to the law, by the time she turns 26, it will be illegal for a plan to deny coverage to anyone, regardless of their health and Natalie will have access to quality, affordable care.

Data from the first three months of 2011 showed that one million more young adults had insurance coverage compared to a year ago. The numbers announced on December 14, 2011 show a continuation of the coverage gains due to the health care law as students graduate from high school and college in May and June and otherwise would have lost coverage.

The data released 12-14-11 are consistent with estimates from surveys released earlier in the year. Those surveys have shown an increase in the number and percentage of young adults 19 to 25 with health insurance coverage. Specifically, the Census Bureau and the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index Survey, as well as the NHIS release of data through March 2011, reported similar trends through early 2011.

The results, highlighted in an HHS (Department of Health and Human Services) issue brief, show that the initial gains from the health care law have continued to grow. "The data announced today show that, because of the health care law, there is a continued and consistent pattern of improved health coverage among young adults," said Sherry Glied, Ph.D., HHS assistant secretary for planning and evaluation. "The Affordable Care Act has helped literally millions of young adults get the health insurance they need so they can begin their careers with the peace of mind that they're covered."

Welcome, New Members!

- Elizabeth Anderson at Natchez
- Antonia Barnum at Maxwell
- Holly Blackson at Sun Valley
- Derek Callahan at Sierra Vista
- Laurie Castro at Sparks High
- Jessica Conner
at Washoe Inspire
- Kurt Cornell at O'Brien
- Sarah Dermer at Galena
- Keri Huddleston at Mill St.
- Deborah Jones at Drake
- Donne Levy
at Spanish Springs High
- Monica Malone at Wooster
- Shanlee Meyers at Maxwell
- Anne Moody
at Hidden Valley
- Elizabeth Mosier
at Damonte Ranch
- Jill Neri
at Spanish Springs High
- Shayla Ogg at Towles
- Catherine Oppio
at TMCC HS
- Courtney Parry
at Hidden Valley
- Shannon Quinn
at Washoe Innovations
- Caitlin Ries at Maxwell
- Annette Sherrors at Drake
- Patrick Ulrich at Huffaker
- Linda VanCitters at Veterans
- Suzanne Walsh at Pine
- Lindsey Wells at Traner
- Megan Yopez at Hidden Valley



Contract Corner: Personal Leave / Personal Business Leave / Leave of Absence

Chuck Fletcher / UniServ Director

Sometimes you just need a day to take care of personal “stuff.” Personal Leave and Personal Business Leave are for this very purpose – but what’s the difference between the two? And what needs to be done?

Personal Leave shall be granted for two days each school year. One is granted unencumbered (with pay), and the second is deducted from accumulated sick leave. **Personal Business Leave** is granted for up to three days each school year; two days deducted from accumulated sick leave and the third with a substitute’s pay deduction.

What is the “reasonable notification” that the contract mentions? Basically this means that the district wants to know as soon as possible so that any necessary arrangements can be made, so notify your supervisor. And don’t forget to call AESOP for a substitute.

Do I have to tell my supervisor why I want the leave?

For Personal Leave you do not have to provide any explanation – it is “personal.” For Personal **Business Leave**, you do need to provide the *general nature* of the business to support that it cannot be done outside of school hours or that it will “not reflect adversely on the District.” The principal cannot deny either of these leaves as long as the request meets the guidelines.

For both Personal Leave and Per-

sonal Business Leave, “this leave shall not be granted during the first and last weeks of school unless approved by the principal/supervisor.” However, if the leave is to be used during the last week of school and you are enrolled in a class to be used for professional growth, then it will be accepted.

The other limitation for Personal Leave is that no more than 15% of a school’s staff (or the District-wide nursing staff) can use the same day – another reason to notify as soon as possible.

These days **do not** accumulate from one year to the next if unused. So, let’s recap: one day “free” – three days deducted from accumulated sick leave – one day with substitute pay deduction. Two days are “personal” – no reason need be given; three days are for “business” – requested because it can’t be taken care of outside of school.

The language for these leaves is in our “contract” which can be found on both the WEA website and the WCSD website. Personal Business Leave is article 21.6, and Personal Leave is 21.8.

Questions? Call 828-3022!

Extended Leaves of Absence

When wishing to apply for a Leave of Absence for an extended period of time (a year or more) the requests for that leave should happen by April 1, 2012. Leaves can be granted after that time by the Area Superintendent. This will allow returning to the same position.

WEA / WCSD Recognize Nationally Certified Teachers and Counselors

On February 23rd the WEA & WCSD will hold a reception in honor of the new National Board Certified Teacher and Counselors.

The teachers are Rachele Carano (Maxwell), Richard Clark (Reno HS), Amanda Cox (Hunsberger), Luonne Gerow (Hunsberger), Cathy Gorham (Billinghurst), Donna Green (Westergard), Regan Hartzell (Gomm), Lorraine Hill (Hunsberger), Taniel Hunter (Anderson), Cherie Kuykendall (Cannan), John Perrin, Kristin Ritenhouse (Hunsberger), Susan Wheeler (Cannan), Terry DeBarger (Reed), Tione Duncan (Spanish Springs HS), Richard Hoadley (Reed), and Lisa Pitches (Reed).

The newly certified counselors are Erin Parker (Swope), Marina Connor (Elmcrest), Terrie Velasquez (Westergard), Lisa Rollins (Vaughn), and Katrina Fries (Kate Smith/Smithridge).

Our congratulations to everyone.

WEA Legal Services Visits

As part of your membership, you are entitled to two half-hour sessions with our law firm, which you can use to discuss any non-employment-related legal issues or questions (real estate, divorce, custody, etc.). The law firm visits the WEA Office twice a month, on the second and fourth Tuesday, from 3:00 - 5:00. You must schedule an appointment if you wish to participate in the legal visit - call Chelsea at 828-3026.

Scholarships for Children of WEA Members

Is your child a member of the graduating class of 2012 here in the Washoe County School District? Is he or she going on to study at a vocational school or university? The WEA offers three scholarships to help with tuition costs, just for the children of WEA members.

The Ernie Johnson Vocational Scholarship, for \$1,000, is awarded to a student pursuing a degree at a two-year or vocational college.

The Marilyn Owen Academic Scholarship, also for \$1,000, is awarded to a student pursuing a degree at a four year university.

The Lancaster Family Memorial Scholarship, for \$2,000, is awarded to a student pursuing a career in elementary education.

The WEA also offers the Kathy Powell/Thelma Davila Scholarship, for \$1,000, awarded to a high school senior of Hispanic descent who has an interest in pursuing a career in education. The applicant for the Powell/Davila

scholarship does not need to be the child of a WEA member.

You can download the application forms for each of these scholarships from the WEA website: www.weatoday.org. Building reps and high school scholarship chairs should also have received copies of the applications. Scholarship applications are due back in the WEA office by Monday, April 2nd, 2012. They can be submitted via mail, fax, email, or in person. If you have questions, please call Chelsea Canon, the WEA Office Manager, at 828-3026.

The scholarships will be presented to the winners at the annual WEA-TACT Recognition Day ceremony on Wednesday, May 9th, 2012. The award presentations will be in Ballroom C of "The Joe," UNR's Student Union, from 5:00-7:00. Outstanding Graduates - two from each high school - and their Most Influential Educators will be recognized at the ceremony as well.

The Cat is Back!!!



In celebration of Dr. Seuss' Birthday on March 2nd and Nevada Reading Month this March, The Cat will be happy to visit your classroom or your school. Contact Elaine Lancaster at 828-3025 to book her appearance!



WASHOE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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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.

Discount Ski Tickets

This year we've got ski tickets from Northstar-at-Tahoe / Heavenly and Squaw Valley / Alpine Meadows available at discounted rates to WEA members. Just stop by the WEA Office during business hours, 8:30-4:30 Monday through Friday, to buy them. Cash or check only - sorry, no credit or debit cards.

Kirkwood tickets are also available at a discount (\$58 each - that's \$21 off!) - for instructions on how to purchase them, visit www.weatoday.org/tickets.htm.

And as always, we have movie tickets available in the office for \$7.50 each.

Northstar-at-Tahoe / Heavenly

Adult (ages 19-64): **\$81** each

Teen (ages 13-18): **\$74** each

Child (ages 5-12): **\$47** each

Squaw Valley / Alpine Meadows

Adult (ages 23-64): **\$76** each

Young Adult (ages 13-22):
\$58 each

Child (ages 5-12): **\$20** each