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Mark Your Calendar

November 12th

Veterans Day - no school

November 22nd & 23rd

Thanksgiving and Family Holiday - no school

November 28th

Membership Committee Meeting
WEA Office
4:30 p.m.

December 5th

Rep Council Nominations
Open for NSEA
Board of Directors Seat



SKI SEASON IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

WEA will be offering discount ski tickets at surrounding resorts including Mt. Rose, Squaw Valley, Kirkwood, Northstar.

Please call the office after November 10th for pricing and ticket availability.

Another way that Membership Does Pay!

Elementary & Secondary Education Act (ESEA) - We Need To Get It Right This Time

Ken Buhrmann / WEA President

Currently our elected leaders in Washington, DC are debating the reauthorization of ESEA, also known as "No Child Left Behind." This reauthorization is an opportunity to offer a new vision for public education, a vision that actually does ensure every child the opportunity to "learn, grow, and succeed." If this vision is to be achieved, our Congressional leaders must carefully craft a bill that will address the core of what is needed for every child to succeed. This vision must include the following five concerns:

- An end to the punitive, test-based accountability system that measures memorization skills, not the ability to compete and succeed in the 21st century.
- An accountability system that looks at the full range of factors that go into making a great school.
- Resources devoted to reducing class sizes so that all children can receive the individual attention so critical to learning.
- Resources targeted to helping the most at-risk students stay in and succeed in school.
- A comprehensive plan to ensure every child the highest quality teachers, including innovative approaches that establish teaching as a respected profession.

Unfortunately, at this time, it seems Congress might be heading in the wrong direction. The current approach seems to be only making the flaws of the present system worse. As an example, the House of Representatives draft language does the following:

- Links teacher pay to

standardized test scores!

- Continues to rely overwhelmingly on a standardized test to measure school and student achievement!
- Fails to take into account unique needs of English Language Learners and students with disabilities!
- Ignores class size reduction and access to quality early childhood education!
- Imposes many new mandates without any guarantees of additional resources to implement them!

"The train is on the wrong track!" We, professional educators, recognize this as flawed legislation and the reauthorization as it stands now will only make matters worse. We need to encourage our Congressional leadership to take the time to get it right.

How do we do this? It is imperative that Senators Reid and Ensign and Representatives Heller, Porter, and Berkley hear from you, the educator in the school and the voter.

Write letters and send postcards to our Congressional leaders. It is simple. Go to www.nea.org/lac and click on NCLB. There will be sample letters for you to use as well as e-mail addresses for your Congressional leaders. Also, the NSEA web site will have the same links for you to use if you wish to use that site instead- www.NSEA-NV.org.

Remember that a simple fifteen minute commitment to become involved can have a long-lasting impact on public education nationwide, the careers of your colleagues, and the lives of our students. Please become involved and help make a change for the better.

Empowerment Schools... Closer to Reality

Virginia Doran / Executive Director

In following the newly passed state law, a design team was established in Washoe County that included teachers, administrators, board of trustee members and business people. Over a period of the last month an application process has been established and was distributed to the schools.

Truth or Consequences

*Written By Dana Galvin,
Vice President and Membership Chair*

Happy Autumn! Aren't the leaves beautiful? It tells us a change is on the way. I believe we need a change in the way we approach our potential members, as well. We must be armed with answers to the difficult questions they may ask.

While attending the Summer Leadership Conference, I was fortunate enough to be given a small pamphlet called, "The Truth About NEA..." The NEA Response to its Critics". In it, there are twenty deceptions with twenty truths. I find the one I am going to share to be especially apropos given the importance of the upcoming caucuses in January.

Deception 8: NEA members who become involved in politics are unprofessional.

Truth: NEA encourages its members to become effective advocates for students by participating in politics.

Politics influence all aspects of education/school budgets, curriculum and textbook content, class size, and other pressing educational concerns. Elected and appointed officials set the budgets, make the policies, and design the programs for education at all levels. They also vote on the collective bargaining agreements that determine compensation and working conditions for educators nationwide. Teachers and education support professionals are front-line soldiers in the battle for quality public education

The State will fund 5 schools to the tune of about \$400 additionally per student. The structure at these schools has yet to be determined and will most likely be different at each site.

The main thrust of the empowerment schools is to provide more autonomy at the school site to try new and different structures

and education reform. They know first-hand about the challenges faced by students and educators. Getting involved in politics gives them a voice in matters that affect children, public education, and public education employees. NEA and its affiliates, WEA and NSEA, communicate with members about candidates and encourage them to actively campaign for issues that affect or threaten public education. Considering what's at stake, school employees can't afford not to be politically active.

All building reps have a copy of this question and answer booklet. Just ask to see it if you have questions. Become involved...the future for you, your colleagues and your students depend on it!

Contract Corner...

Early Separation Incentive Plan-it's time!

Elaine Lancaster/UniServ Director

ESIP can be found in Article 24.13 of the negotiated agreement. You must be 50 years of age and have 20 years of continuous service in the district before September 1 of the year in which you participate and submit the application.

ESIP is now open for applications-contact Human Resources for an application. The application is due back to Human Resources by December 7, 2007. The board of

and have some additional money to do so. This is obviously a very simple explanation, but the easiest to describe.

We believe that there will be at least one high school, a middle school and three elementary schools. This is just a guess and nothing has been determined. The initial application being submitted by the principal must have support of the staff, parents and community. If the principal has sought the endorsement of staff, parents, community or organizations in support of the school's application, the principal must provide an attached list of those supporting the school's application.

The District must receive the application on October 29th. The Deputy Superintendent and Senior Directors will review the applications and make recommendations to the Superintendent and eventually to the Board of Trustees.



trustees will consider the applicants in January. There is a CAP on the amount of money to be used for ESIP incentives. The maximum incentive will be 30% of the salary at TG Step 20. Should the number of employees and the calculated ESIP entitlement exceed the CAP, the benefit will be distributed to those employees with the greatest number of continuous years of service in the District.

Please contact the WEA office with any questions

Public Policy, Accountability & Assessment

Paul Richter, Director of Assessment
October 18, 2007

Assessments of all kinds are in integral part of educational processes, from the central educational unit, the classroom, on up to the state department of education. It is important for teachers to fully understand the purposes of each assessment they administer and to fully understand what is expected of them during, and after, the administration of those assessments.

This article features two key sections of the **WCSD Primer for Testing** and presents them for emphasis in an effort to best inform teachers concerning appropriate practices during the administration of assessments. The goal of PPA&A is that administration of assessments mandated by either the WCSD Board of Trustees or the Nevada Legislature goes smoothly and with a minimum of difficulty and lost instructional time for teachers.

If you have any questions about any aspects of these excerpts, or about assessment in general please e-mail Paul Richter, Director of Assessment, at prichter@washoe.k12.nv.us

From Pages 6 and 7 of the WCSD Primer for Testing:

“District-produced examinations (Benchmark Assessments, CRT’s, High School Math Finals, and CBE’s) may vary significantly in rules and procedures from State tests. Administrators and staff must carefully read all resources that accompany these tests. If there is a question about proper procedure, please contact PPA&A before proceeding.

Benchmark Assessments: Though generally administered at the ends of instructional periods, the WCSD Benchmark Assessments are not, by Board of Trustees mandate, summative assessments. They are, instead, to be used to inform instruction, encourage learning, and enhance student achievement. State standards and accountability assessments provide clear targets, common benchmark assessments measure progress towards those targets, and continuous classroom assessment provides day-to-day feedback. All three assessment measures work together to provide a complete picture of student achievement. Assessment for learning promotes the WCSD vision of students reaching their full potential.

WCSD Benchmark Assessments are semi-secure. This means that teachers have access to them, but students do not, prior to scheduled testing. There is no requirement to lock benchmark

assessment test booklets in the school’s locked testing cabinet. Teachers should have ready access to the books in their classrooms and should review them to assist in implementing the instructional pacing outlined for a subject. However, students should not be given access to the books prior to scheduled testing, nor should the items on the tests be taught to students prior to scheduled testing.

After test administration, teachers are encouraged to use the test books to review items, student responses and item analyses generated by Edusoft with their students to help guide instruction and to increase the level of student involvement and buy-in to their learning.

Summative Assessments in Math, Grades 1 and 2; 9 through 12 and CBE’s:

The summative math CRT’s in grades 1 and 2, the Common Math Finals in high school, and the Credit by Exam opportunities afforded middle school students on-site in the world languages and Algebra 1-2 **are all secure test administrations.** This means that the kinds of security measures followed with state assessments must be employed unless specific procedures or rules in the related administration guidelines indicate otherwise. Again, administrators, test coordinators and teachers must read the related test administrations guidelines completely and carefully prior to the administration of these assessments.”

Finally, following is a test security checklist that can also be found in your WCSD Primer for Testing. While it doesn’t cover every aspect of test security, following this set of reminders will protect you from making mistakes.

IMPORTANT SECURITY REMINDERS FOR TEST ADMINISTRATORS

High Schools: verify the eligibility and identity of EACH student who is testing—determine credit sufficiency prior to the testing session.

Use a sign-in sheet with a column to log the test booklet numbers assigned to each student.

Provide an answer document for every eligible student enrolled during testing.

Use **ONLY ONE ANSWER SHEET PER STUDENT**—students testing in different subjects on different days are to use the same answer sheet.

Use **ONLY ONE ANSWER SHEET PER STUDENT**—students testing in different subjects on different days are to use the same answer sheet.

No items of any type are permitted on the desk surface. Have students store back

packs and other personal belongings in the rear of the testing room.

Follow the script in the Test Administration Manual **Word-for-Word, in English.**

Provide accommodations as outlined in the students’ IEP, 504 or LEP Accommodation Forms.

Students who do **NOT** have IEP, 504 or LEP Accommodation Forms must test under **REGULAR CONDITIONS** and may **NOT** use

- calculators (except in designated sections of the ITBS/ITED);
- dictionaries (except on the Grade 5 and Grade 8 Writing Assessments);
- reference materials or other instructional aids.

Students must **NOT** be left unattended or alone with unlicensed personnel **or test materials.**

Walk the room—actively monitor students during testing; observe that students are bubbling responses in the correct subject section of the answer document.

Electronic devices such as cell phones, pagers, PDA’s, iPod’s, etc. are not permitted.

Provide additional time in a test-conducive environment—follow the school’s plan for orderly transition from one testing situation to another. Students must **NOT** be left unsupervised during the transition and may not interact with peers prior to completing a part or session.

DISCLOSURE OF TEST CONTENT IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED BY STATE LAW—do not read, review, copy, reproduce or take notes on test items.

Students may **NOT** receive assistance with test items.

Test items may **NOT** be translated into another language.

Collect and log in all materials—test booklets, writing prompts, HSPE formula sheets, scratch paper, pencils, etc. Students are to leave the room with only their personal belongings.

Check test booklets for answer sheets tucked inside.

Ensure that the number of test booklets (or prompts) and answer sheets returned is identical to the quantities that were distributed prior to testing. (30 students = 30 tests + 30 answer documents)

Report irregularities **IMMEDIATELY** to your School Test Coordinator or Principal.

Counselor's Connection - *Legislative Update*

Mary Hausauer/School Counselor

The Nevada Legislature has passed new bills which have a direct impact on students and educators in Washoe County. Susie Rusk, the director of Counseling Services, stated, "Many of these legislative changes affect secondary schools in particular. The intent of the bills is to insure that kids don't get lost in the system."

Here is a summary of some sections of two newly enacted statutes which affect our students:

AB 212, Section 2 requires the board of trustees of each school district to adopt a policy for each public school in which ninth grade pupils are enrolled to develop a four-year academic plan for each of these students. This will be developed in consultation with the pupil, the parent or legal guardian, and the school counselor. The plan should include the educational goals that the pupil plans to complete before graduation from high school.

Section 3 requires that high schools have a program which designates a separate geographic location within

the high school in which ninth grade students attend classes (where practicable), the identification of special needs for counseling or remediation for ninth graders, and the assignment of personnel specifically for the ninth grade students.

SB 312-Education, Section 8 requires the board of trustees to allow for promotion to high school of eighth graders not passing middle school requirements. It requires the adoption of a policy for a student to be placed on academic probation and to earn high school credits while the student is completing the requirements for promotion to high school.

Section 9 expands the age of compulsory school attendance to 18 years.

"We are looking at these legislative changes in light of what schools in this county are already doing," said Rusk. "Many high schools have designated counselors for freshmen and have students preparing educational plans. The main focus is to build on our existing programs and make sure student deficits are addressed.

With the Gateway curriculum and the Response to Intervention (RTI) changes as well as the legislative bills, there is a great need to increase the communication and assistance we give students and their parents."

Dates set for Master's Equivalency

The Master's Equivalency Committee for elementary applicants will be meeting December 3rd, applications are due November 26th; February 4th, applications due January 28th; May 12th, applications due May 5th.

The secondary committee will meet December 4th, applications due November 27th; February 5th, applications due January 29th; May 13th, applications due May 6th.

The master's equivalency program is outlined in Article 24.3 of the negotiated agreement.

Free Food, Lesson Plans and a Chance to Make History

If you have watched a political debate on television and thrown a shoe at the screen; if you haven't voted since 1975 because you didn't think it mattered; if you have ever wondered, "Where do these candidates come from?" Then you definitely should be a part of the caucus process. If you don't know what a caucus is, or how it works, or what you are supposed to do once you get there; then you should definitely be a part of the mock caucus process.

Your chance to make history is a slogan that Nevadans will hear often during the next three months. Nevada will hold some of the earliest caucus in the United States. The Democratic Party caucuses will be held on January 19th in Nevada and the Republican Party caucuses will be held early in 2008 as well.

Every educator should count it their duty to take advantage of this opportunity. To assist in this, WEA is sponsoring a "mock caucus" for high school government and middle school social studies teachers. The caucus is scheduled for November 15th at the WEA Building at 1890 Donald Street near the intersection of Moana and Peckham. There will be "Meet, Greet, and Food" from 4:00 until 4:30 with the actual "mock caucus" beginning at 4:30 and being over no later than 6:00. Teachers who attend will receive a set of lesson plans and be able to network with their colleagues, in addition to becoming knowledgeable about the caucus procedures. Representatives from both the Democratic Party and Republican Party will be on hand to assist and answer questions.

WEA Building Reps recently participated in a mock caucus. It was fun and informative. It was comfortable and user-friendly and no one felt put on the spot. Participants are not asked to identify with a particular candidate or party; but rather join forces in support of types of pizza or candy bars. While the mock caucuses are fun; they prepare voters to attend their local caucuses and have direct input into their party's presidential nomination.

Whenever I feel like getting involved is not really worth my time and trouble, I reread a quotation by Dr. Martin Luther King, that I have taped in my lesson plan book: "In the end we will not remember the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends." Don't be silent. Begin now to prepare for your chance to make history.

Nurse's Notes - National Runaway Switchboard

November is National Runaway Prevention Month

Sharon G. Freier/RN

From National School Nurse Association

NATIONAL RUNAWAY SWITCHBOARD:

The goal of the National Runaway Prevention Month is to: Increase the awareness of the issues facing runaways, and Educate the public about the solutions and the role they can play in preventing youth from running away

NRS provides a variety of educational resources to help concerned adults address this issue in their communities. Visit <http://www.1800RUNAWAY.org> for more information, including curriculum. The National Runaway Switchboard offers promotional materials free of charge. Materials include posters, bookmarks, brochures, and wallet cards with our crisis line number, and pencils. Visit http://www.1800runaway.org/pub_mat/promo.html to access these materials.

NATIONAL BULLYING PREVENTION AWARENESS WEEK

October 22 – 28, 2007

It is sponsored by PACER Center and cosponsored by National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education, National Education Association, and National PTA. "Childhood bullying is a significant problem nationwide," said Paula F. Goldberg, executive director of PACER, a national parent center located in Minnesota. "It can cause school absenteeism, mental and physical stress, poor school performance, poor self-esteem, and, in some cases, school violence. Statistics show that 160,000 children in the United States miss school each day as a result of being bullied. That's not acceptable. "Teachers and parents can play a critical role in creating a climate where bullying is not tolerated. When adults and children stand together, bullying ends," Goldberg said. The <http://www.PacerKidsAgainstBullying.org> Web site features lesson plans and materials for teachers, resources for parents, and interactive activities to teach second through sixth graders about bullying

and how to prevent it.

HEALTH OBSERVANCES FOR WEEK OF OCTOBER 15-19:

National Health Education Week Oct. 15-19 National Center for Health Education Society for Public Health Education 375 Hudson Street, New York, NY 10014, (212) 463-4053 ray@nche.org - <http://www.nche.org> Materials available Contact: Ray Marks National School Lunch Week Oct. 15-19 School Nutrition Association 700 South Washington Street, Suite 300, Alexandria, VA 22314-4287, (800) 877-8822, (703) 739-3915 Fax servicecenter@schoolnutrition.org - <http://www.schoolnutrition.org> Materials available Contact: Andrew Steele

World Food Day October 16 U.S. National Committee for World Food Day 2175 K Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20437, (202) 653-2404, (202) 653-5760 Fax <http://www.worldfooddayusa.org> Materials available Contact: Patricia Young

National Mammography Day October 19 American Cancer Society 1599 Clifton Road NE, Atlanta, GA 30329, (800) ACS-2345 <http://www.cancer.org> Materials available Contact: None designated

To find out more health observances throughout the year, please visit <http://www.healthfinder.gov/library/nho/>

nho.asp#m4.

PREVENTION NEEDED AFTER LATEST SCHOOL SHOOTING

The National Crime Prevention Council (NCPC) said that student accounts and preliminary reports out of Cleveland, OH, emphasize the need for schools to examine the school violence prevention measures they have in place, enforce their proper use, recognize warning signs of troubled students, and follow up on every report of school violence threats. NCPC urges schools, parents, and students to pay attention to key signs of potential school violence, which include:

- A student threat of bringing a weapon to school
 - Student talk about retaliation or a copycat crime
 - Overhearing or seeing a classmate "hit list" at school or online
 - Troubling essays or other writing by a student
 - Sudden behavior change or mood swings
 - A student having trouble controlling his or her anger or with handling conflict
 - Students experiencing bullying or other means of peer isolation
- NCPC lists steps to preventing school violence for parents, students, school personnel, law enforcement, and the community on its web site at <http://www.ncpc.org>.

NEA Classroom SuperStore

— Your one stop for all your classroom needs.

NEA members save an additional 10% off already low warehouse prices, along with free shipping on any size order (stock items only). Most orders ship within 24 hours for three-day delivery. Other features include: free catalogs, toll-free ordering, gift certificates, price match, easy return policy, and personal order history for tax time. For more information, visit us at neamb.com/discount.

Preparing for Tomorrow

Information and tips that can help your family – and the human family – prepare for the future.

*Brought to you by NEA Member Benefits
Green ideas for saving money and the planet*

The earth as an ecosystem is changing due to industrialization and globalization. In fact, there is more carbon dioxide in the atmosphere today than in the past 650,000 years. What can we do to help save the environment, conserve energy and preserve the planet for future generations? Here are some easy, money-saving ideas that can help you lead a healthier, greener life:

- Choose reusable products over disposables. Disposable mops and new vacuum-style mops cost more than \$115 per year, compared with \$50 replacement heads and cleaner for a traditional sponge mop.
- Save trees by using sponges or rags

for cleaning. To sterilize sponges, put them in the dishwasher, soak in a bleach solution or heat them in the microwave for 1 minute.

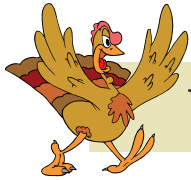
- Cut down on plastics, made from nonrenewable resources, including oil and natural gas. The most common types are #1PET and #2-HDPE, which are generally safe and can be recycled.
- Replace disposable batteries with rechargeable ones.
- Turn off electronic devices and save over 1,000 lbs of carbon dioxide and \$256 per year.
- Save hundreds of dollars a year on electricity by buying energy-efficient appliances.
- Reduce the use of fertilizers and pesticides on your lawn. Natural organic gardening techniques use low-

processed natural supplements such as compost, alfalfa, seaweed, greensand and can be handled without gloves.

- Choose products made by companies committed to environmental responsibility. Check out www.green-living.com for natural cleaners and house paint with zero VOC (Volatile Organic Compounds).

Sources:

StopGlobalWarming.org,
consumerreports.org, www.ftc.gov,
www.nrdc.org



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Scott Bobier-Vaughn
Maria Luchetti-Kate Smith
Tracie Monserrate-McQueen
Carlye Johnson-Loder
Jamen Neef-Allen
Jennifer Whalley-Sun Valley
Braden Wegate-Desert Heights
Victoria Shapiro-Smithridge
Shari Mason-Brown
Kris Engstrom-Billinghurst
Carl Oberriter-Billinghurst
Matthew Rowe-Billinghurst
Amy Silver-Warner
Kimberly Buell-Health Services
Renee Major-Hunsberger

Candace Streeper-Dunn
Amie Stickel-Mathews
Joan Ring-Mathews
Nicole Manuelito-Lemmon Valley
Valarie Anagnos-Hidden Valley
Elizabeth Korinek-Pine
Sharon DiMuzio-Booth
Joan Graham-Shaw
Carrie Searles-Pine
Kathryn Ferris-Incline ES
Tracy Mross-Mt. Rose
Christina Duncan-Maxwell
Michon Schmidt-Hug
Margaret Herald-Drake

Tahoe Players presents

the 16th annual holiday play
at the Grand Sierra Resort

December 4th 5th 6th & 7th.

Show times are 9:45 and 11:45 am with
performances 1 hr and 15 minutes.

Contributions are \$6 per student and teachers attend free

This years play is direct from Broadway and features over 200 local actors,
dancers and singers performing Disney's Beauty and the Beast. The live
orchestra will be on stage as the signature feature of the annual event.

For more information call the Artistic Director Monica Folio at 775 831
0379 or log on to www.tahoeplayers.org



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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.

Advertising

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