

The Connection

Volume VX, Issue II

February 2010



**Our Voice Washington
2010 Legislative Goals**



- NEWS/UPDATES
- MATERIALS
- RESOURCES
- PROGRAMS



**EPA Resources for
K-12 Educators**

Inside this issue:

Mid-term Report	2
Video Contest	2
Free class @ OESD	3
Calendar of Events!	4

Real Reform vs. Phony Reform



Daphne Davies

Professional Educators: show your stuff, connect to parents!

Are educators being sent to “Reform School” or can you use your professional expertise to help reform the schools? The Moby Dick of all education bills, HB 2261, last year passed the legislature accompanied by consternation on the part of many professional educators. What is HB 2261? It’s “Ed Reform,” meant to fix “what’s wrong” with public schools. According to the maker of the bill, “Waiting on the courts while we have children in Washington who, are, on average, less educated than their parents is unacceptable.” (Glenn Anderson, R. – <http://hrc.leg.wa.gov/news>).

How does “Ed Reform” affect the average educator? Lets the state wait until later to fully fund education costs; depends on prototype models not fundable in the current economy (projected \$2.6 billion shortfall in the current state budget).

Proposes to change the salary system, evaluation systems, and certification for educators...and much, much more.

So how can we know the difference between “phony reform,” claims based on no real data, and the “Real Reforms” we know can make education in the State of Washington the best in America?

REAL Reform	PHONY Reform
Funds schools that have all they need – costs \$\$\$	Shakes the system up & changes things with no \$
Bargaining between all stakeholders establishes fair and right agreements that promote learning	Removes bargaining for a more “uniform” approach
Trains and educates teachers and other staff to be more effective; provides time and \$ for collaboration	Assumes that test scores = effective teacher; ignores different testing cohorts year to year
Helps struggling schools with coaches, time, aid	Punishes schools that fail to meet AYP, firing principals and staff
Creates an evaluation system that encourages professional development, mentoring and more	Focuses on what educators are “doing wrong,” but provides no venue for improvement
Provides funding for enhanced education and expanded skills based on student learning needs; shares rewards among all	Performance pay is provided for individuals whose students have high test scores without evidence of improved student learning

We must talk about Real Reform and pressure those who are bent on Phony Reform to hear us! We ARE the “Experts” on the Education Agenda today. We were trained for

Continued on page 4

WEA Olympic Council Mid-Year Report 2009-10

Below is the mid-year report for WEA Olympic Council. We've accomplished a lot in the areas of training, advocacy and preparation for this year's legislative session but still have much to do!

Local Presidents, WEA Executive Board and staff met, talked, trained:

Local President Summer Retreat and Dinner
Local Pres. Outreach Meetings Shelton and Port Angeles
Informal local release Pres. lunch meetings
Workshop: Communications Styles & Crucial Conversations

Members trained together to bargain and defend solid contracts

Advocacy Training for building and grievance reps: two at the Council office, one in Sequim
Coordinated Bargaining Meeting focused on successes and ongoing issues
Member teams trained at WEA Bargaining Conference

Executive Board and Rep Council met to guide the work of the Council

Executive Board Retreat (August) Established work plan for the year
Executive Board meetings September, October., November, December and ongoing
Rep Council September meeting – kicks off the year nicely
Executive Board members met with WEA President and staff to discuss WEA Strategic Plan
December Rep Council/Open House and WEA Children's Fund (total raised: \$1,320)

Lobby Activities began at the state and federal levels

Met with and discussed HB.#2261 with Reps. McAuliffe and Oemig
WEA "STARS" member, Kate Cox-Ebert, is our contact on federal issues. ➤

The Connection is an online member newsletter published by WEA Olympic Council, a regional office of the Washington Education Association.

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We welcome your comments! Please contact us at WEA Olympic Council, 26297 Twelve Trees Lane NW, Poulsbo, WA 98370. Telephone: (360) 779-4818 or toll-free 800-800-4896.

WEA 6th District Congressional Contact Team: Suzanne Wisenburg (Bremerton EA) and Tedd Davis (Port Townsend EA)

First Lobby Team: Martha Patterson, Suzanne Wisenburg, (Bremerton EA); Denise Williamson, (Quilcene EA); Roxy Smith, (Grapeview EA)

ESP Lobby Team: Marla Rasmussen, (Port Angeles Para Educators); Pat Nicholson, Cheri Mlodzik, (CKESP); Chris Alm, (Chimacum IA).

23rd Legislative District Representative Rolfes Advisory Team: informal advisory group from several locals met on January 30. PoliSparks planning set for 2/28

Crossroads: Economic Opportunity Institute on tax reform date TBA

WEA Board Directors

Donna Raymond, Barbara Gapper and Suzanne Wisenburg (Directors); Pat Nicholson (ESP Member at Large and Indoor Environmental Quality Work Team), Nat Hong (Higher Ed); Daphne Davies: Council President, WEA Budget and Finance Committee

Our \$\$ supported our colleagues and students

\$500 to Kent Education Association. to help with the costs of their strike

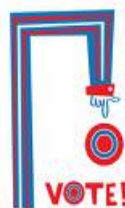
Whatcom Middle School: \$500 sent for educators' supplies lost in a massive fire at that building

Forks EA member trained at Minority Leadership Training
WEA Children's Fund: members raised \$1,320 from December Open House Benefit

WEA 'Day at the Ball Park' (Tacoma Rainiers) organized; tickets on sale now: other councils are participating. A portion of the ticket sales will benefit WEA Children's Fund

Increased WEA PAC contributions (1,049 members = over \$25,000/year)

Vote on February 9th



We have nine districts council-wide who have levy elections on **February 9**: If you live in one of these districts, please cast your **yes** vote: Bainbridge Island, Bremerton, Cape Flattery, Central Kitsap, Grapeview, Hood Canal, Mary M. Knight, North Kitsap and Sequim.

Video Contest/Prizes for Your Students

Healthy Schools Day is April 26, 2010. To raise awareness of the importance of healthy schools, WEA is sponsoring a "create a video" contest for students (prizes for these categories: elementary, middle/junior high and high school. Complete details and application form are available here.

Deadline is March 15, 2010.



Free Workshop

Partnerships for Improved Student Learning

Using Appreciative Inquiry (AI) to Focus on Student Strengths for the Individualized Education Plan (IEP)

Supported by an OSPI Grant

Provided by

WEA Special Education Support Center Training Partners

&

Olympic Educational Service District #114 and the Kitsap County Parent Coalition

Date: February 27, 2010

Time: Saturday - 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
(lunch and snacks provided)

Location: Olympic ESD 114
105 National Avenue N.
Room 132A/B
Bremerton, WA 98312

Workshop is **Free!**
Clock hours available for \$5

This class is designed for educators and parents to:

- Jointly recognize the elements of a comfortable meeting environment
- Understand the value of strong, positive partnerships to improve student performance
- Use a new tool called Appreciative Inquiry to communicate positively and more effectively to develop strong partnerships that improve student learning

Registration:

**Contact Lynn Malloy at 360-405-5836 or email
lmalloy@oesd.wednet.edu**



February 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2 Lobby Day	3	4	5	6
7	8 ESP Lobby Day	9	11	12	13	14
14 	15 Revenue Rally in Olympia. Info	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 Local Presidents Meeting 8:30 a.m. Council office	27
28	1 March	2 	3	4	5	6

Real Reform vs. Phony? Take Action, Reach Out!

Continued from page 1

the jobs, we face the realities in our classrooms, on buses, in lunchrooms, and in the halls and offices of the schools.

Let's show off schools that are preparing students for a world their parents were not educated for because it didn't even exist. How many of the parent generation were taught how to build robots, write college-level papers as high school juniors, study brain chemistry with today's knowledge (and much, much more)? Let's help our community understand the challenges some students face: real life catastrophes, absent or incapable family members, mental and health issues, limited English language skills? We need to be honest about what can be improved and work together. We must show what we are doing right.

Action Steps:

REACH OUT to your parents; they are the most powerful ally you can have. And they care about what we care about: the students, their learning, their lives. We all want the same thing: for them to thrive. Put an educator into **every** PTA in your district. And when you go to the meetings, tell the stories of your successes. Ask for help with your challenges.

REACH OUT to your local legislators; invite them to visit your classrooms, halls, Commons and stay awhile (no "drive by" visits). Tell them what you are achieving and what the challenges are.

REACH OUT to your School Board and your business community members. Show them how smart, capable and focused you are.

Professional educators **CAN** "tell the story" best and **WILL** collaborate with concerned parents and community partners to focus on **Real Reform** and send the Phonies packing!