



Shortwaves

Everett Education Association / United Teachers of Everett

Volume 6, 2016-17

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter—an informed membership leads to a strong membership.

TOPICS IN THIS SHORTWAVES: LEGISLATIVE SESSION BEGINS • SILVER TIPS • SNOHOMISH TESTING RESOLUTION • CONTRACT QUESTIONS • WEA/NEA-RA ELECTIONS • NEW EDUCATOR NIGHTS

Legislative Session Begins

Our e-mail paid off!! Governor Inslee released his K-12 education budget for the 2017-19 biennium on December 14th. He placed a high priority on addressing McCleary and providing significant increases in funding for our schools to provide for competitive pay for educators and to begin to invest in additional staff as required under Initiative 1351.

The **\$3.8 billion** in K-12 budget increases that were released included the following changes:

- \$2.4 billion to bring state funding for K-12 employee compensation to competitive wage levels, including higher beginning educator pay and a shift in salary allocation models to one that is compressed and tied to certification level.
- \$485 million to implement class sizes of 17 in grades K-3.
- \$337 million to phase-in implement 80 hours of professional development for teachers and ESAs, and 40 hours for paraprofessionals by the 2018-19 school year.
- \$325 million to provide 1 FTE for social and emotional support in each prototypical school to be used for school counselors, nurses, psychologists, social workers, and family engagement coordinators.
- \$12.3 million to increase the Maintenance Supplies and Operating Costs (MSOC) for CTE programs.
- Phase down to a levy cap of 15%. While the percent is lower, ALL districts experience a net gain in resources from the combination of new state dollars and levy authority.

It is also important to highlight what is NOT included

- No changes to TRI and local bargaining
- No move to statewide collective bargaining
- No changes to how health benefits are managed (no SEBB)
- No district goes off the levy cliff
- No 1:1 switch of state and local property taxes (levy swap)

Meanwhile, the Education Funding Task Force failed to meet a deadline for presenting school funding recommendations to the Legislature. Instead of offering specific plans for fully funding K-12 public schools, Republicans on the Task Force proposed limiting local collective bargaining and other union rights as one of their “guiding principles.” In contrast, Democrats on the committee proposed specific education funding investments that were lower than the Governors, but made no changes in current bargaining laws.

What is next?

On January 16th, we sent over 150 members to join a rally of over 6,500 teachers, parents, and students on the capitol steps. It was amazing seeing groups like the NAACP and Washington PTA join in the fight to fully fund our schools. After the rally, groups tried to meet with legislators, but many of them were “too busy” or “didn’t know the rally was going on.” One would think if 6,500 teachers, parents, and students were there, they would find time to meet with them during a session focused on funding schools. A special thanks goes out to Senators McCoy and Pearson and Representatives Sells, Koster, Robinson, and Lovick for meeting with our members.

What can you do now?

1. E-mail me (jkink@washingtonea.org) if you are interested in lobbying (it is really fun and easy) or want to be a part of a political group meeting once a month to discuss the most recent news over drinks and food.
2. The WEA has an amazing blog on current bills and highlights at <https://www.washingtonea.org/ourvoice/>.
3. Text “OurVoice” to 41411 for periodic updates about the session.
4. Read your *Shortwaves*, especially home e-mail (we don’t use the District’s e-mail for communications with political action in it).
5. Call or e-mail your legislators once a week. Call using the legislative hotline at 1-800-562-6000 or e-mail using our Take Action page at <http://www.washingtonea.org/ourvoice/take-action/>.

Who loves the Silvertips?

Our second annual Silvertips night is January 27th! Last year was a lot of fun and we hope to have an even bigger crowd this year. The Silvertips are proud to offer discounted tickets to all Everett School District Employees and their families to the Everett Silvertips game on Friday, January 27th @ 7:35 pm vs. the Portland Winterhawks.

Simply use this link to order tickets: http://everettsilvertips.3dcartstores.com/Everett-School-District-br-Everett-Education-Association-BR-Family-Fun-Night--127vs-Portland_p_485.html. Lower Level (GREEN) seats for \$18 each (normally \$27.50 each online) & Upper Level (RED) seats for \$15 each (normally \$23.50 online). **Order 4 or more in one transaction and they will cut \$2 off each ticket! (\$16 each for Lower Level, \$13 each for Upper Level).**

Hurry! Seats are filling up fast and online orders are due by 1:00 pm on Friday, January 27th (game day), and will be filled on a first come, first serve basis!

Snohomish Testing Resolution

The Snohomish School District is leading the way to make common sense changes to testing in our state. The following resolution was adopted by their school board in November and have asked others to do the same. The resolution is asking the state to de-link testing from graduation, fully fund any required testing, and to allow districts to choose what test is best suited for their students—all of which is required by federal law. At their December meeting, our Rep. Council unanimously adopted the same resolution. At our next Rep. Council meeting they will be adopting a plan to encourage the Everett School Board to follow suit. Below is the adopted resolution.

A resolution urging the Washington State Legislature to authorize local district control in the matter of high school assessment

Whereas Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 with the December, 2015 law known as the “Every Student Succeeds Act” or ESSA; and,

- ESSA allows our state to grant school districts the option to choose a nationally-recognized standardized high school assessment in lieu of the Smarter Balanced Assessment; and,
- The ESSA Consolidated Plan Team has recommended that said option be allowed to local school districts as the law designates; and,
- Federal law does not now and never has required using state assessments as graduation requirements; and,
- ESSA declares that assessments required under federal law should only be used for the purposes for which they are designed and validated; and,
- The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium has declared that its assessment was not designed nor was it validated for the purpose of graduation; and,
- Despite this Washington currently uses the Smarter Balanced Assessment as a graduation requirement for students in contravention of ESSA; and,
- Many districts have already chosen to offer their high school students universal access to other nationally recognized standardized assessments; and,
- Universal student access to such assessments promotes equity for all high school students by removing barriers to college entrance; and,
- Local districts believe this to be in the best interests of their students even though the cost of the decision is borne locally; and,
- Washington continues to unconstitutionally underfund the education of all students;

Therefore, we, the educators of the Snohomish Education Association, urge the Legislature to:

- Delink the federally-mandated high school assessment from our students’ graduation requirements; and,
- Allow local districts the ESSA-designated discretion to select a nationally recognized high school assessment in lieu of the Smarter Balanced Assessment; and,
- Fund the local district choice on par with per-pupil funding for the Smarter Balanced Assessment.

Contract Questions

If you have a question regarding our contract, please send them to me and we will continue to answer a few questions in each *Shortwaves*.

What is the responsibility of Building Reps?

--A new teacher from Gateway Middle School

Building Representatives are the building level representatives of our association. They are elected each year and are the key piece to communicating and rallying members. They also help maintain the contract, meet with their principal about concerns, and advocate for members in the building. Each month they attend our governing body meeting or Rep. Council and hold a building meeting afterwards to convey key pieces about members’ working conditions, profession, and political world. Each school is allowed one Building Representative per every ten members. We encourage all members to serve as a Building Representative at least once in their careers.

WEA and NEA Representative Assembly Electronic Elections

Elections for WEA and NEA Representative Assemblies will occur February 2-14. Instead of our usual paper ballots, we will use an electronic version. Please look for an e-mail on February 2 with instructions on how to vote. We are hoping for a better turnout, to cut down on paper, and relieve some of our Building Representatives’ workload.

New Educator Night—February 23rd from 5-7 pm

Topic: *Enhancing your instruction using technology*. If you plan to attend, RSVP to slamb@washingtonea.org as soon as possible. Dinner will be served! When you RSVP, please let Shelly know if you have dietary restrictions. **FREE CLOCK HOURS** if the topic meets the requirements.

Calendar of Events

New Educator Night—January 26 (EEA at 5 pm)

Silver Tips—January 27th

Ex. Board—February 13 (EEA at 4:15 pm)

New Educator Night—February 23 (EEA at 5 pm)

Rep. Council—February 27th (EEA at 4:30 pm)

Legislator Rally—March 8th (TBD at 6 pm)

EEA/UTE CONTACT INFORMATION:

2710 Grand Avenue * Everett, WA 98201 * Phone: (425) 259-0622

Jared Kink, President: jkink@washingtonea.org or 425-259-0622

Angela Knudson, Administrative Assistant: aknudson@washingtonea.org or 425-259-0622