

# MEA Frontline

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## TAKING ACTION TO SUPPORT PUBLIC EDUCATION!

*By Arden Watson, MEA President*

We have all just experienced our first furlough time. While the opportunity to leave early is enjoyable, it comes with a cost. The cost is a 1.9% salary reduction. When the bargaining team negotiated this furlough time, we intentionally separated it from Professional Growth Wednesdays, in order to highlight the difference for staff and parents. However, the location of this time on the calendar is not enough to make these cuts visible. We must do more if we are to stop further cuts and get this time reinstated. The challenges that are ahead will require the efforts of all MEA members.

The road ahead includes:

- American Education Week (November 14-18) has been designated by WEA as a week for local action related to funding cuts that public education has already sustained, and potential cuts that could be passed during the special legislative session. **What actions should MEA members take during this week?** Please share ideas (invite legislators into our schools, emails, share info at a PTA meeting, funding resolution, rally for education...) with your Building Rep prior to their October 25<sup>th</sup> Rep Council meeting.
- November 28<sup>th</sup> – This is the first day of the special legislative session, which is being held for one purpose – to cut just over 2 Billion dollars from the second year of the biennial budget. WEA, based on a new business item passed at the WEA Representative Assembly, has designated this day as a statewide day of action. Actions might include sending groups to Olympia or actions in communities across our state. Pilchuck UniServ will be sending some members and leaders to Olympia on this day. **Are you interested in being a member lobbyist this year (either during the special session or regular session)?**
- December 16<sup>th</sup> and January 18<sup>th</sup> furlough days: January 18<sup>th</sup> (the only Wednesday furlough) was designated by MEA and MSD as a joint day of action, as it is during the regular legislative session. **Would you be willing to participate in a local action with the district, either in Marysville or in Olympia?** Would you give some time on **December 16<sup>th</sup>** to participate in some local action to highlight the impact of state funding cuts on our students? Again, please **share your ideas** with your Building Rep.

There is the potential that the Marysville School District and MEA members could be significantly impacted by actions taken during both of these legislative sessions. Please stay informed and be prepared to join others in actions that support our students and our profession.

# HEADLINE ONLY NEWS

- ❖ WEA's **Minority Leadership Training Conference** is October 28 (5-8 p.m.) & October 29 (8-4). This is an opportunity for WEA educators of color to attend a conference to increase their effectiveness as educators and leaders. Email Richard Fisher for registration information at [rfisher@washingtonea.org](mailto:rfisher@washingtonea.org).
- ❖ **Member benefit:** If you need an attorney, as a WEA member you have access to the **Attorney Referral Network**. You are provided with two free 30-minute consultations per school year (must deal with two different matters). Beyond the free consultations, services are provided at a discounted rate (30%) for personal legal matters such as real estate, wills, domestic relations, and traffic violations. Cogdill, Nichols, Rein, Wartelle, & Andrews is the network attorney firm in our area. You may contact them at 425-259-6111.
- ❖ Interested in running for a **WEA position**? Nominations for WEA Board of Directors (Pilchuck UniServ has two board positions) and NEA State Delegates must be received at the WEA Headquarters by 4:00 p.m. on December 14, 2011. Voting for these positions, as well as local elections will take place in February. For more information, please contact Arden Watson.
- ❖ Tickets are still available for **Diane Ravitch**, author of "The Death and Life of the Great American School System." She will be speaking at the Seattle Town Hall on Thursday, November 17 at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are \$5 and available at the door, or at Brown Paper Tickets 800.838.3006. WEA has also arranged for Ravitch to speak at the WEA Board meeting on November 18<sup>th</sup>.
- ❖ The movie, **Mitchell 20: Teacher Quality is the Answer** is being shown in Seattle, October 21-27 at AMC South Center. You can view the trailer at: <http://www.mitchell20.com>.



## MEDICAL POOLING DOLLARS

The September MEA pooling came to \$900.78 for a 1.0 FTE employee. When you subtract dental (\$111.05 WDS or \$76.65 Willamette), vision (\$27.35) and long-term disability (\$23.60), there is \$738.78 (WDS) or \$773.18 (Willamette) left over to go towards your medical plan.

If you are less than full-time, multiply your FTE times the \$900.78 and subtract dental, vision, and LTD premiums. The remainder is your medical allowance.

Pooling occurs again in October (numbers will be out soon) and February.

# SUPPORTING THE 99 PERCENT !

WEA stands united with tens of thousands of people around the country currently protesting the record profits and record bonuses made and paid by banks, Wall Street financiers and hedge funds. At a time when the American economy continues to be in deep recession, with millions of people hard-pressed to make ends meet, it is clear Wall Street and financial institutions are out-of-touch with the reality faced by 99 percent of Americans.

Washington Education Association (WEA) President, Mary Lindquist - "In our own state of Washington, the actions of these financiers and banks have helped create an unprecedented state budget deficit that continues to grow by hundreds of millions of dollars. This deficit means educators, Washington students, and other public sector employees are bearing the brunt of the state government's financial crisis while Wall Street bankers celebrate. It is unacceptable to have so many children and so many families in our state living below the poverty line.

"As we stand in solidarity with those who are protesting the massive financial inequality of our times, we are also encouraging WEA members to speak out on behalf of more than one million children in Washington public schools and their families."

The WEA Resolution is posted on the MEA website - [www.marysvilleteachers.net](http://www.marysvilleteachers.net)



## 2011-12 MEA EXECUTIVE BOARD

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| <b>President – Arden Watson</b>     | <b>Elementary (2) – Cathy Elkington</b> |
| <b>Vice President – Randy Davis</b> | <b>Secondary (1) – Becky Roberts</b>    |
| <b>Secretary – Corina Hansen</b>    | <b>Secondary (2) – John Hodgins</b>     |
| <b>Treasurer – Craig Iversen</b>    | <b>Special Ed Chair – Tom Freeburg</b>  |
| <b>Elementary (1) – Cathy Davis</b> | <b>Specialist Chair – Jill Garcia</b>   |

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