

THE PILCHUCK ORGANIZER

A call to action!

A publication of the Pilchuck UniServ Council



November 7, 2011

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!!

We all dream about having the perfect start to the school year - small class sizes, stable schedules, and enough materials for each student. With the start of this year, members of Pilchuck experienced the nightmare of state cuts resulting in furlough time, loss of pay, fewer resources, and larger class sizes.

Camlynn Tafa, a government teacher at Jackson High School in Everett, had 38 students overcrowding her small classroom. Six students had to stand at the edge of her room feeling disconnected from their education with no place to sit. No doubt you experienced something similar to Camlynn this year?

Last May, over 1,200 education activists showed up at Cascade High School to tell legislators how cuts to public education funding would lead to a nightmare. Legislators did listen, bad legislation didn't get passed, but funding did get cut. After the May 17th event, we told you that this was the beginning of a movement to take back the voice of public education from those who have made it a nightmare.

Unfortunately, the nightmare is going to continue.

Governor Gregoire announced her menu of reductions to close another **\$2 BILLION** shortfall for the 30 day special legislative session starting on November 28th.

Among the menu of reductions are the following:

- Eliminate State Levy Equalization (*cuts between \$30 to \$300 million*)
- Eliminate State Funding for Transportation [yes, no buses] (*cuts \$220 million*)
- Increase 4-12 class size ratio by 2 students [this means substantial RIF] (*cuts \$137 million*)
- Reduce school year by 3% or 5 days [pay cut for us] (*cuts \$125 million*)
- Eliminate National Board Stipends (*cuts \$40 million*)
- Eliminate State Funding for All-Day Kindergarten [RIF of 650-700 teachers] (*cuts \$38 million*)
- Reduce monthly state allocation for teachers' health benefits [costs will continue to rise] (*cuts \$20 million*)
- Reduce state support for colleges/universities by 20% (*cuts \$222 million*)

AGAIN, YOU WILL BE EXPECTED TO DO MORE, WITH LESS, FOR LESS.

When will we wake-up from this nightmare? How many more of Camlynn's students will have to stand on the side of her room next year? 8? 9? 10?

When will enough be enough?

**Together, we need to act, take back the voice of education,
and build our dream for public education.**

OVER ---->

The "Pilchuck Organizer" is a publication of the Pilchuck UniServ Council dedicated to informing Association membership concerning the central issues we face over the next few years: (1) The need for adequate and stable funding for public education; (2) The need to utilize collective bargaining to improve the working lives of our members; (3) The importance of membership involvement in influencing legislative decisions; and (4) The obvious need to add common sense to education reform. Each issue of the "Pilchuck Organizer" will address one or more of these four areas.

PILCHUCK UNISERV COUNCIL – 2500 Hewitt Avenue, Suite 100, Everett, WA 98201 – 425-258-3697

**Working with the Everett, Granite Falls, Lake Stevens, Marysville, Monroe, Mukilteo, Skykomish, Snohomish, and Sultan local Associations
UniServ Directors: Diane Flynn, John Morrill, and Mike Wartelle Administrative Assistant: Shelly Lamb President: Arden Watson**

Locally, there are several events in the coming weeks our students need YOUR help with:

1. On November 28th, wear red to your classroom, take a picture with fellow educators wearing red, then e-mail it to a legislator, newspaper, and put it on Facebook—instructions will be coming soon.
2. During the week of November 14-18, invite a legislator to your classroom so they can see how these cuts have and will hurt students.
3. Ask your local president how you can get involved—member lobbying, one-on-one discussions, etc.
4. Come to “Fish ‘n Chips and Politics” (a group of educators who discuss politics, organize, and get active, while enjoying food and drinks) on November 16th from 5:30 to 7:00 at Fish Tail Brew Pub in Everett. Please RSVP to Diane Flynn at dflynn@washingtonea.org.
5. Write your legislator, Everett Herald, and on Facebook how these cuts will further hurt our students.
6. Talk with your colleagues about these cuts and what action we need to take.
7. Join PTSA, connect with family, friends, neighbors, and tell them how these cuts are going to destroy our education system.

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!

STAY INFORMED; GET ACTIVE.

**OUR STUDENTS ARE NOT GOING TO GET A WORLD CLASS EDUCATION
UNLESS WE GET IT FOR THEM.**