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Tackling school safety starts with student, educator voices

I had the honor of speaking at the beginning of the Partners in Prevention workshops last month. It was the Saturday following Read Across America. I had just been to two different elementary schools that had two very different reactions to the killings in Florida, so I shared with them what it was like coming into the schools.



Kim Mead

One of the schools had an all-glass entrance. I went to open the left side of a double door and it was locked. So, I pulled the door on the right side. It was also locked. I looked to see a button, much like a doorbell. A person came out of the office down the hall, smiled and opened the door. It was then that I realized, this was an attempt to make the school safer. I continued with dropping off books and reading in the classroom and went to the next school in a different district. I walked into the building where I was met by several adults welcoming me and went into the office to check in. Two very different responses. I was left wondering why we can quickly react after a tragedy, but don't always put into place preventions.

It made me really stop and think about what we want for students.

How do we inspire students? How do we make sure they become lifelong learners eager to try new things, explore new subjects and tackle the unknown? The answer is we don't have to do anything to achieve those things. Students come to our doors with those dreams and expectations. The reason we don't always recognize it deals with the issues outside of education. The world they face each day and the societal expectations often interfere with the natural wonder of learning. If you are hungry, it's difficult

to concentrate. If you don't feel safe, it's difficult to become engaged in a new learning experience.

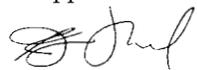
No student of any age should feel anything but excitement and awe when they enter a public school. When the unthinkable happened, shock was the result. When the unthinkable happened again — and again — we began to see reactions, but not responses. Students don't want excuses. Students don't care about what is currently part of law. Students want results. And they need each and every one of us to stand with them.

Students became inspired by the millions of people who have been standing up for human dignity. It is not difficult to understand how they have now taken the venue that has captured the world to make it their stage. They are making sure their voices are heard.

The answers won't be found in one solution. And the answers won't be found by adults stubbornly refusing to act while another incident occurs.

I met with Gov. Inslee to see if we could partner together on behalf of the students in Washington. We will move forward, making sure we have student voices and educator voices at the table to create solutions that address the cause as well as the needs following any tragic event in the future.

Students need to feel the excitement to learn. Together, we can make sure it happens.


Kim Mead
WEA President

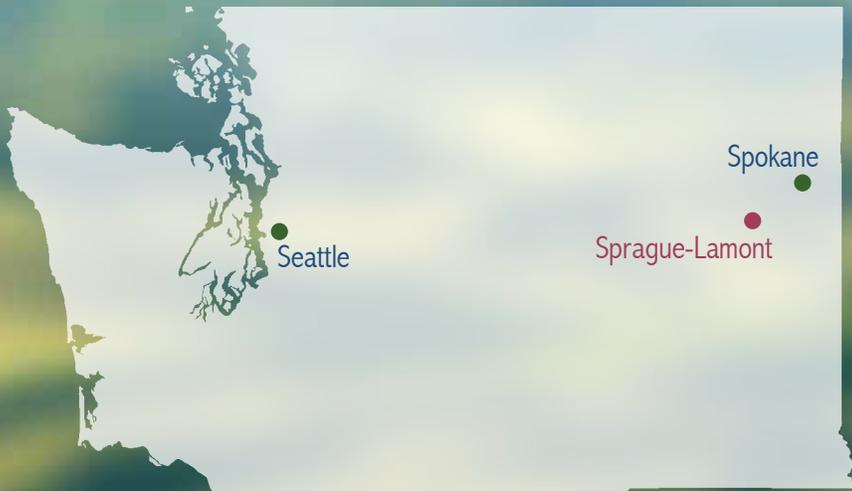


Thousands of people say 'Enough is enough' and marched in cities across Washington March 24 in student-led protests demanding stricter gun laws.

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- 10 Planting seeds of empathy and justice in schools through restorative practices



Local leader Shannon Hughes talks about the combined Sprague-Lamont school district certificated staff rejoining WEA as a new union local.



Alone no more ... Sprague-Lamont rejoins WEA family

Shannon Hughes has been an active part of her school community — but she’s never joined WEA as a member.

Until now.

Hughes works in Lamont, a small town a half-hour southwest of Spokane, where she is the 5th-8th grade English Language Arts teacher, truancy officer and occasional fill-in principal. Educators in the combined local of Sprague-Lamont left WEA to try an alternate teachers’ association before she was hired. But continuing changes in education policy and funding made it clear something big was missing when it came time to negotiate a fair contract.

“The Legislature keeps changing things and it makes it super hard in a small district where we obviously wear many different hats,” Hughes says.

“Last fall we started talking about how are we going to be able to negotiate and do these things on our own,” Hughes recalls. “And so, we chose to try to bring in the WEA as well as the other organization, to talk about how they could go through this process. The WEA came out and explained what they could offer us. The other organization said, ‘Oh, we don’t help you bargain — at all.’”

Educators decided it was time to reconsider going it alone. New cards went out to authorize a union election, the vote was held, and Sprague-Lamont educators agreed to rejoin WEA. Educators met in late January to sign individual membership forms, and WEA’s board is scheduled to formally accept the new local this month.

“It really wasn’t a hard push,” Hughes’ recalls. “It was more, we were ready, and it was time for us to make a change.”

Hughes says the overriding sense in the Sprague-Lamont communities, with just over 100 students combined, is *ohana*, a willingness to watch out for one another as family. School employees had been willing to forego some of their own needs during negotiations out of a sense that their sacrifices would help their students.

“We’re all trying to support one another, and you’re trying to negotiate and support yourselves, it’s kind of hard because we don’t necessarily know if what we’re being given is fair,” Hughes says.

“When it came down to it, (the concern was) how are we going to bargain?”

When we do ask for things it was kind of hard to get some of the things that we want, and we know it’s what would be best.”

Joining WEA has eased Hughes’ concerns about trying to negotiate rapidly changing policy and salary issues without having enough information to proceed.

“I’m ecstatic!” Hughes beams. “I’m ecstatic to belong to the WEA. I feel like it’s going to be a huge benefit.”



Teachers fill out membership enrollment forms during the first meeting after the combined Sprague-Lamont school districts’ certificated staff voted to rejoin WEA as a new union local.

On video: Sprague-Lamont EA members talk about what it means to be a part of the Association at washingtonea.org/SL.

On March 24, hundreds of thousands of demonstrators took to the streets worldwide to demand action against gun violence — a movement led by survivors of a school shooting in Parkland, Fla. The student-led marches were held in cities across Washington state, including Seattle (pictured), sending a clear message to legislators: Ignoring the toll of school shootings and everyday gun violence will no longer be tolerated.



Struggling with school violence

Educators support commonsense solutions to reduce gun violence in schools

Across America, schools are struggling with how to defeat an epidemic of gun violence.

While public debate has narrowed to arming or not arming teachers as the immediate fix, educators and academics point to other options that may be more successful — and more accepted.



Conversations are also being facilitated by local WEA unions to ensure safety for students and staff. In one example, more than 70 Federal Way EA members, parents, students and administrators, including Superintendent Tammy Campbell, joined for a difficult and

powerful conversation last month about school safety and gun violence.

Concerns included unrealistic workloads for counselors, which leave little time to identify and assist students who are facing major struggles in their lives. Teachers, under pressure to constantly improve academics, have few options to engage in social-emotional conversations with students. Privacy rules often restrict educators from receiving critical information or history that other district employees know about students. On open-concept campuses, it's nearly impossible to monitor or restrict access to individual classroom doors. As a sign of how much times have changed, one suggestion was that active shooter drills, now common for students, be included in back-to-school nights for parents, too, to help reinforce their gravity with families.

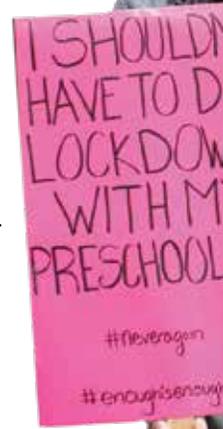
Federal Way administrators also previewed a Santa Ana School Police safety video that will be used (on

YouTube, the *SAUSD Run Hide Fight Elementary School* version). The screening surfaced additional issues, including classroom doors that can be locked only when teachers step outside with their key, and how to protect students with severe disabilities who can't run to safety or may not understand directives to stay quiet and hidden.

Like locals from Spokane EA to Evergreen EA in Vancouver, the Federal Way EA's Executive Board listened to its members and, in the following days, adopted its own school safety resolution. FWEA's noted that federal and state lawmakers have failed to reduce gun violence, and that arming teachers is not the answer. FWEA pledged to support one activist group that currently does have momentum: students in Federal Way and nationally who have organized walkouts, protest marches and, on April 20, the student-led National Day of Action.

The Evergreen EA resolution similarly rejected "any policies that include arming educators as a solution or response to gun violence in our schools." That is not just an opinion of individual educators or local union leaders, however. A wide ranging cross-section of academic associations, mental health experts, children's advocates, community activists, behavioral experts, arts groups, social workers and more have endorsed a public health approach to stopping school violence.

"School is one of the few places where students historically felt safe, regardless of the instability at home or the violence in their neighborhood," says Ines Bergman, a counselor at



On the day after the shooting in Parkland, Fla., Brad Read, an ELA teacher at Spokane's Shadle Park High School, asked his students what was on their minds. He created a space for them to talk and a handful of students ended up working with other students in the area to organize activities around gun violence like the student walk-out and the Spokane March for Our Lives.

"I was unbelievably energized and inspired to be a part of their March. While they had some adult help, they organized a march where between 4,000 and 5,000 people showed up in weather where rain and snow was coming sideways," Read says.

He created space for them to work with others then pretty much got out of their way, he says. He was asked to speak at the march where he said, "We will not hold a gun and we will not be a shield. What we will pledge is to be the supportive mentors they ask us to be, as we stand with and beside them to build the future they want. What would it be like if, in every school, in Spokane, across the state of Washington, and across the country, was a place where every student felt safe, welcome, and empowered? That is the future they ask of us, that is the future they deserve, and we owe them nothing less."



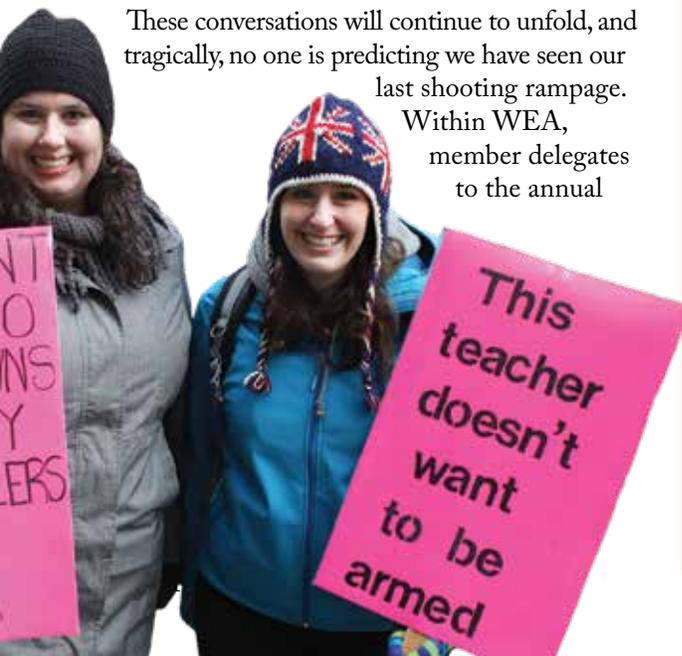
Kirkland's Juanita High School. "Guns are the last thing kids want to see at school, and they are now saying it loud and clear!"

"The mental health impact is real; we now see kids, and adults, of all ages exhibiting symptoms of PTSD (posttraumatic stress disorder) when we practice fire drills or if the fire alarm goes off," she says. "The suggestion that school staff should be armed is not only morally incompatible with the role of a teacher, but posterously unsafe."

In its Feb. 28 Call to Action, the Interdisciplinary Group on Preventing School and Community Violence outlined a three-tiered system that would include school climate assessments for physical and emotional safety, adequate staffing for school- and community-based counselors, psychologists and social workers, improvements for training school- and community-based threat assessment teams, better sharing of safety-related information, legal changes to get guns out of the hands of potentially violent individuals, and to ban the most deadly assault-style weapons. The group is comprised of national violence prevention experts.

These conversations will continue to unfold, and tragically, no one is predicting we have seen our last shooting rampage.

Within WEA, member delegates to the annual



Representative Assembly, April 19-21 in Spokane, expect to hear discussion on school safety-related issues.

One thing is certain. Students and school employees deserve better options than run, hide or fight.

Arming educators *not* the answer

Educators overwhelmingly reject proposals to arm teachers and other school personnel, according to a recent poll commissioned by the National Education Association. NEA members support a range of commonsense solutions to address the issue of school shootings in the United States, but arming teachers is not one of them. The NEA poll surveyed 1,000 members nationwide from March 1-5, 2018, on the heels of a proposal by the Trump administration to arm teachers.

Key findings of the NEA national member survey

- ▶ **Educators see gun violence as a huge problem.** 51 percent believe gun violence is a crisis for the country and 36 percent see it as a very serious problem.
- ▶ **Educators strongly support a number of gun violence prevention measures.** NEA members favor universal background checks (99 percent), preventing people with mental illnesses from purchasing guns (91 percent) and prohibiting those with a history of domestic violence from purchasing guns (90 percent).
- ▶ **Educators do not support arming teachers and other educators in schools.** Seventy four percent of members oppose proposals to arm school employees, even if they receive training. Nearly 7 in 10 educators say allowing school personnel to carry firearms in schools would be ineffective at preventing gun violence in schools.
- ▶ **Educators say they would feel less safe if school personnel were armed.** Two-thirds (64 percent) of NEA members say they would feel less safe if teachers and other school employees were armed with guns in their school.
- ▶ **Educators say they would not carry a gun to school.** If allowed to receive training and carry a gun to school, 82 percent of NEA members say they would not carry a gun to school.



“Increasingly, a teacher’s salary in much of the United States is too low to support a middle-class existence.”

(October 2017 WEA file photo) Mabton EA members, working without a contract, hold a streetside informational picket near the district office, where members marched to pack out a school board meeting. Last year, nearly all WEA members got at least the 2.3 percent cost-of-living adjustment mandated by the voter-approved COLA law WEA helped pass more than a decade ago. This year, WEA members have a huge opportunity to negotiate double-digit pay raises.

“Although teachers may be more motivated by a desire to ‘do good’ than some other workers, altruism alone is not enough to attract high-ability candidates to the profession and keep them in the classroom.”

**Now is the time
to stand united
and negotiate
BIG
pay raises**

As Washington public school employees and union members, we have a huge opportunity in coming months — the chance to negotiate *significant* pay raises.

How significant? For certs, 15 percent or more. For classified education support professionals, pay increases as high as 37 percent.

Those are the salary goals the WEA Board adopted in March. Double-digit pay raises are possible for all of Washington’s K-12 public school employees — but only if we get active in our local union contract negotiations and fight for the fair pay we deserve.

“The excuses are gone,” said Shannon McCann, president of the Federal Way Education Association and a WEA Board member. “There is a billion

dollars for salaries coming to our local bargaining tables, and it's our job to negotiate that.

"It's going to take hard work. It's going to take courage. It's going to take organizing. But we must negotiate fair salaries for *all* WEA members."

The idea of a 15 percent raise might seem outlandish at first, but it's actually quite realistic — if we make it happen. Some local unions already have — last year, Mercer Island Education Association negotiated pay raises topping 15 percent for some members.

School districts have the money. After intense lobbying from WEA members, in March the Legislature approved another \$1 billion for K-12 salaries — on top of a billion dollars already allocated for educator pay in last year's budget. And the Washington Supreme Court has repeatedly highlighted the need to increase educator salaries in rulings related to the McCleary school funding case.

Even so, some legislators and school district administrators want to limit educator pay increases to a minimal cost-of-living adjustment.

After years of underfunding and falling behind, arbitrarily restricting educator pay is not acceptable, said WEA President Kim Mead.

Many WEA members are barely keeping even. It's tougher than ever for families to stay in the middle class. Schools have a shortage of qualified certificated and classified staff, the job market is

booming, student debt is high, health care is expensive and housing costs are skyrocketing — more reasons why a major pay raise for educators is reasonable — and necessary.

"We already have been losing teachers to other districts," said Nate Ziemkowski, president-elect of the Snoqualmie Valley Education Association. "I could change districts and make \$7,000 more by driving 10 more minutes.

Ziemkowski said local negotiations are the only way to achieve the higher pay educators deserve and to provide the competitive salaries needed to attract and keep qualified staff for students.

"We just started bargaining in our district," he said. "This is the opportunity for our union to negotiate competitive, professional pay so we can live and work in our community. If we don't get a fair settlement, I don't think I can continue working in my district."

"The difference between teachers' compensation as compared to other workers with a college degree has grown larger over time. In 1994, public school teachers earned a similar compensation (including salary, health benefits, and pension) as other workers with a college degree. In 2015, teachers earned 11 percent less in total compensation (including benefits)."

Making the case for higher salaries

Quotes on signs are taken from "Solving the Teacher Shortage/ How to Attract and Retain Excellent Educators" by the Learning Policy Institute.

"Many studies have found that both beginning and veteran teachers are more likely to leave the profession or change schools because of low salaries."

"Despite the evidence that salaries influence teachers' decisions to stay in the profession (and the quality of teachers attracted to the profession), teachers' salaries are not competitive in many labor markets."

The McCleary school funding

MILESTONES

2004	2007	2010	2012	2014
Delegates at WEA Rep Assembly vote.	McCleary v. State is filed in King County Superior Court.	A victory! King County Superior Court finds for plaintiffs.	State Supreme Court upholds King County judge's ruling	Collect signatures for Initiative 1351.
NEWS Coalition forms.			Members extend support of NEWS.	State Supreme Court issues contempt citation against state.

2004
RA delegates vote to form a coalition to sue the state for failing to meet its constitutional duty to amply fund public education.



2010
Court finds for plaintiffs, declaring that the state of Washington is in violation of its constitutional mandate to make ample provision for the education of all children.

2012
State Supreme Court unanimously rules for plaintiffs, ordering the state to fully fund K-12 public schools as required by the state constitution; Court retains jurisdiction until 2018 to ensure that the ruling is enforced.

2014
In funding basic education, "... nothing could be more basic than adequate pay."
— *State Supreme Court, McCleary v. Washington*

Washington's students, packed into classrooms, rank 47th out of 50 states. WEA members help collect signatures in support of Initiative 1351, the ballot measure that calls for reducing class sizes and caseloads.



Keeping our Promise to All Children.

NEWS Coalition – Network for Excellence in Washington Schools – forms to fight for full and ample funding for K-12. Partners include WEA, school districts and others.



RA delegates in 2004 approve a special dues assessment (\$1 a month for two years) to fund a lawsuit against the state over inadequate school funding.

WEA members agree to extend special assessment of \$1 a month thru August 2018 to support McCleary work; school districts around state also contribute to NEWS.



WEA members score McCleary school funding victory

The 2018 legislative session ended March 8. In the biggest news, legislators approved an additional \$1 billion in state funding for educator salaries as ordered by the state Supreme Court related to its 2012 McCleary decision.

"This is a major victory, and it proves that when we stand united as union members, we have the power in numbers to achieve great things for public schools and our students," WEA President Kim Mead said.

While the fight for fully funded public schools isn't over, observers say it's likely the Court will rule the

state is finally in compliance with McCleary. In addition to the \$2 billion dedicated for educator salaries, the state has increased basic education funding by another \$6 billion. There are still needs, we all know that, but this is a huge step forward for public education.

A little history: The McCleary case originated at the WEA Representative Assembly in 2004 when delegates approved a special dues assessment to fund a lawsuit against the state over inadequate school funding.

Dozens of WEA locals joined the case, and without our support, it's unlikely the case would have been successful.

process has spanned 14 years ...

2015

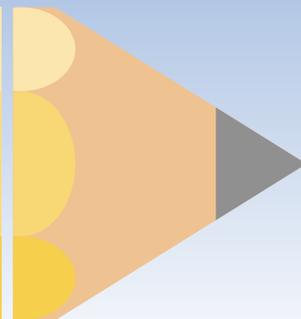
Court institutes sanctions on state of \$100,000 a day.

2017

Court orders lawmakers to increase funding by Sept. 1, 2018. Pro-union, pro-public education candidates win elections with WEA members, WEA-PAC support.

2018

Gov. Jay Inslee signs budget to include an additional \$1 billion for education.



August 2015

Court institutes sanctions of \$100,000 a day for the state's ongoing failure to provide the funding plan; proceeds to be deposited into an education account.

Some 40,000 WEA members from 60 locals approve one-day strikes and walkouts against the state Legislature. It's the first time since 1999 that WEA members have staged rolling walkouts over issues such as pay.



November 2017

The state Supreme Court orders lawmakers to increase funding for K-12 basic education by Sept. 1, 2018. The Court rules the state needs to increase funding for K-12 educator salaries by about another \$1 billion, as required by the Court's 2012 McCleary decision.

New contract settlements continue to boost wages across



Washington. Nearly all WEA members get at least the 2.3 percent cost-of-living adjustment mandated by the voter-approved COLA law WEA helped pass more than a decade ago. Many WEA locals exceed the statewide goal of COLA plus at least 5 percent.

More than 600 WEA members work to elect Manka Dhingra to the state Senate — restoring a pro-labor, pro-public education majority.



March 27, 2018:

Gov. Jay Inslee signs the state supplementary budget, which includes an additional \$1 billion for K-12 educator salaries in the upcoming school year. Legislators earmark that money specifically for pay raises for K-12 school employees in 2018-19. For certificated staff, 15 percent or more. For classified education support professionals, pay increases as high as 37 percent.

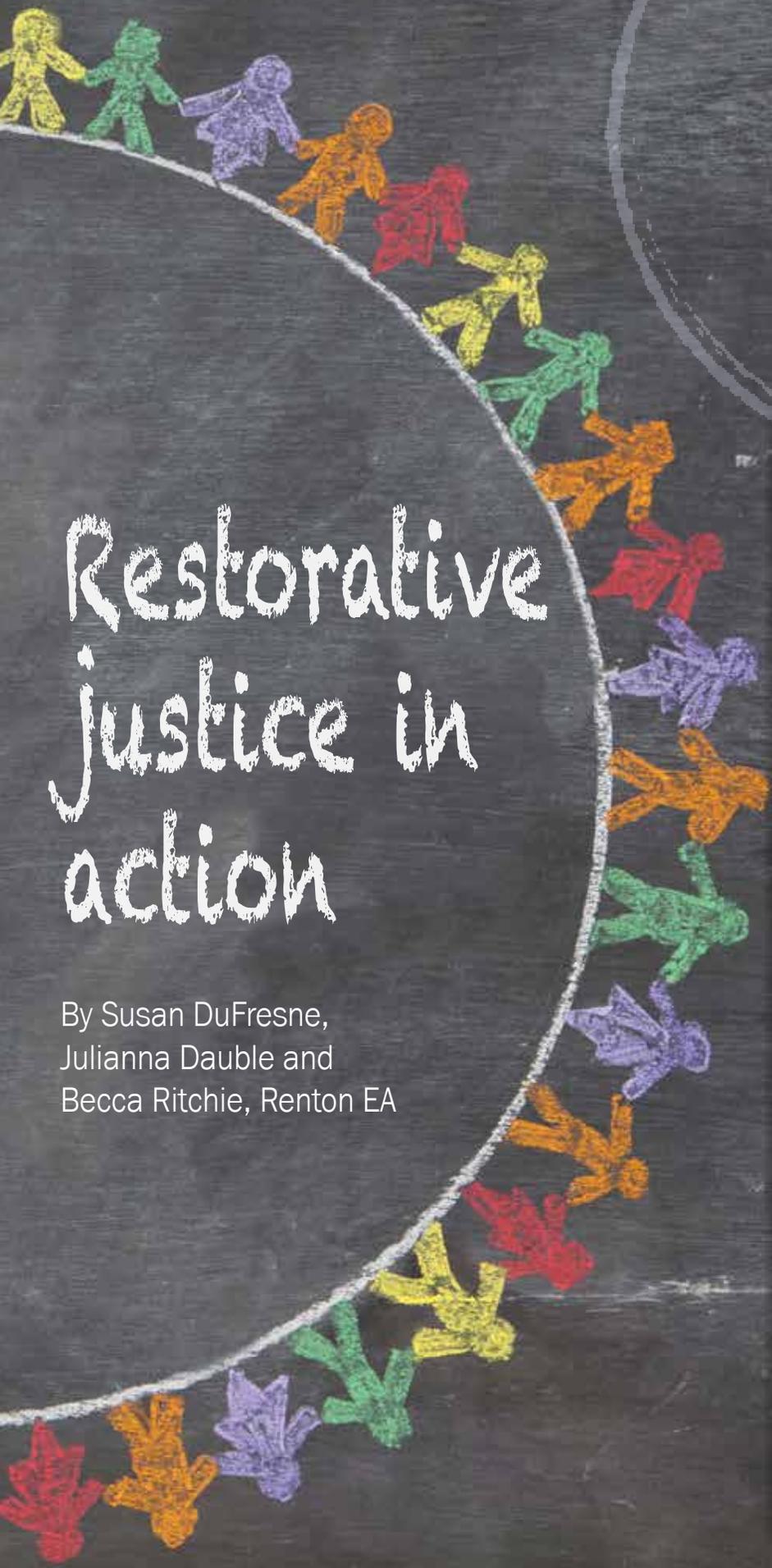
The state Supreme Court ultimately will decide if the state has met its McCleary obligation. We don't expect to hear from them for several more weeks.

Besides McCleary school funding, WEA members scored other big wins this session — including equal bargaining rights for community and technical college faculty.

"It's a union victory at a time we're under attack. It shows why we need to be part of WEA — we have a voice. If we didn't stand together as WEA members this would not have passed," said Carla Naccarato-Sinclair, president of WEA Association of Higher Education (AHE).



It's TIME! It's time to fully fund smaller K-12 class sizes. It's time for professional pay and benefits. It's time to take a stand on the endless amount of high-stakes tests. The Capitol steps turn into a sea of red April 25, 2014 as WEA RA delegates rally at the state legislative building.



Restorative justice in action

By Susan DuFresne,
Julianna Dauble and
Becca Ritchie, Renton EA

In 2016, NEA Vice President Becky Pringle and NEA Executive Committee Member Kevin Gilbert urged delegates at the NEA Representative Assembly to approve New Business Item B calling on NEA to drive policy to end institutional racism in our public schools.

Acknowledging the wisdom of indigenous communities ...

One rising hope toward this end is sweeping across the nation — restorative justice. In order to truly appreciate restorative justice we need to understand that indigenous communities have been successfully using it for thousands of years in every corner of the globe. Restorative justice is opposite the cycle of shame, humiliation, and punishment that has been part of our society, which fractures our communities. This process appeals to many educators who want another way to approach behaviors in their classrooms.

Why restorative justice?

Nineteen states still apply corporal punishment disproportionately to students of color and children with disabilities. Most schools use some form of exclusion when students harm others or break rules. Yet real causes behind harmful behaviors are rarely addressed and top-down consequences that do not factor into fixing what's broken rarely leads to true accountability for offenders. As a result, our school discipline policies are often ineffective and perpetuate institutional racism, causing harm to students by pushing them further away from their learning community.

What is harm? What does it mean to truly repair a relationship?

While remorse is an important stage in the restorative process, it is not the only one. Bring to mind the biggest mistake you ever made. Who was hurt? Were you punished? You can't undo it, but did you get a chance to make it right? Odds are, whatever past error you recalled, you still feel badly about it because you didn't get to authentically fix it. If you had restored your relationship with the

person most harmed you wouldn't consider it such a big mistake! Now consider a time you messed up but did make it right. Do you perceive that experience equally? Which experience provided you with more learning and personal growth?

Restorative justice changes the climate of any organization because it fosters true accountability between people. With a restorative lens we don't waste our time admiring broken rules and imposing a penalty that pushes the offender further away from the community. Instead we concern ourselves with understanding who was harmed, why something happened and how to fix it. When a person harms another, then repairs that harm, they grow from the process. This can be life-changing for everyone involved.

Circles in integrated kindergarten

Utilizing resources found in the book *Circle Forward: Building a Restorative School Community* by Carolyn Boyes-Watson and Kay Pranis, kindergarten circles began with simple questions like, "What is your favorite ice cream?" as I acted in the role of Circle Keeper. I began coaching students who took turns daily as the Circle Keeper. Deeper questions like "How do you feel and why?" were asked. I quickly noticed students had observed my coaching and were ready to step into that role. They began running morning restorative justice circles independently, including students with special needs! Now we're digging even deeper to talk about the qualities of a good friend. They learn whole-body listening using their ears, mind and heart.

Trust, community, empathy and compassion are modeled and built over time through restorative justice. When a student makes a mistake and harm occurs, most often the group agrees to a sincere apology — either verbal or written, a hug — and an agreement that the person who harmed them will never do it again.

Julianna Dauble's fifth-grade circles this year

Circles connect my fifth-grade students with each other in the deep ways we all need for our best learning to happen. Circles, and the simple rituals that create safe trusting spaces, can be therapeutic or celebratory. Problems that would have gone unreported get brought to light, saving lives. My students don't always know that they're using restorative justice practices when we are in the hallway, planning how to fix the harm they caused someone at recess.

When kids know conflicts and meanness are dealt with to the satisfaction of the person harmed, they do not allow bullying to happen around them. The dynamic shifts. So, safety plans, restitution, acts of service, open communication all become expected parts of solving problems. The creative ways kids generate solutions to problems can be mind blowing (and a good life lesson) for us grown folks! Integrating restorative justice into my practice has dramatically changed the climate in our learning spaces. More trust, more hope, more learning, more joy.

NEA's NBI B must be more than words on paper. To end institutional racism, our members will continue to lead towards social justice. Punitive practices are causing harm rather than repairing harm. Why not try what has worked in indigenous communities for centuries? Why not embrace restorative justice?

Circles connect my fifth-grade students with each other in the deep ways we all need for our best learning to happen. Circles, and the simple rituals that create safe trusting spaces, can be therapeutic or celebratory.

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Students, educators win big this legislative session, thanks to WEA members

Here's a high-level view of how WEA's 2018 Unity Agenda fared in the Legislature. *Many of these wins are a direct result of the new pro-union, pro-public education majority in the state Senate, which WEA members helped achieve by supporting Sen. Manka Dhingra's election last fall.*

United for higher education employees



Full and equal collective bargaining rights for community and technical college faculty. The freedom to negotiate fair pay is a fundamental union right and has been a top WEA priority for more than a decade.

The legislation grants college faculty the freedom to negotiate locally funded pay raises — a freedom that all other public employee unions already have in Washington. Equal bargaining rights for faculty were at the top of WEA's Unity Agenda policy priorities for the 2018 legislative session and have been a WEA goal for over a decade.

The freedom to negotiate better salaries with local funding will provide stability and allow colleges to attract and keep quality faculty for their students.

Community and Technical College faculty will also see COLA increases in the upcoming year, as funded last year for salaries over the 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years.

United for K-12 classified and certificated employees



- \$1 billion to fund salaries in the 2018-19 school year to comply with the Supreme Court's McCleary order. WEA has supported the McCleary case from the start, more than 10 years ago.

- 4 percent increase in salary allocations for districts whose teachers have above-average experience, beginning in 2019.

After last year's budget, many veteran teachers were concerned that changes in how salaries are funded would prevent them from earning pay raises, even in a post-McCleary environment. This provision addresses those concerns by providing funding and flexibility for school districts with a high number of veteran educators.

- The minimum employment standards for paraeducators has been delayed by one year to Sept. 1, 2019.

United for aspiring educators



More money for state need grants, providing extra help for college students seeking assistance in paying for school.



It took more than a decade, but Washington's community and technical college faculty members finally win the right to negotiate fair pay.

United for retired educators



- 1.5 percent COLA on the first \$25,000 of income for Plan 1 Retirees.

- Increase in Medicare subsidies to \$168, up from \$150.

This is the first COLA for Plan 1 retirees since 2010. Though the COLA and Medicare subsidies are modest, we see them as a positive step in the right direction.



United for our students

Expanded access to college financial aid for DACA students.

Other new funding highlights include:

- \$27 million for special education. A step in the right direction, though we recognize more funding is still needed.
- \$4.4 million for a new 6 percent regionalization factor for school districts abutting another regionalized school district that receives a regionalization factor of 12 percent or more.
- A two-year hold harmless revenue provision for school districts that would otherwise receive a net reduction in funding because of last year's funding plan.

The WEA Governmental Relations Team will be providing more detailed session information soon. Visit washingtonea.org/ourvoice/ for updates.

