



Stronger when we stand together

This time of year ...

One of the best things about this time of year is the holiday lights. I find them a welcome distraction from the increasing darkness of December. They literally add brightness and color to these notoriously short gray days. They help me reconcile the question: why are December days so short but feel so long?

For educators, research shows December is one of the hardest months of the school year. We've been going non-stop. Back-to-school nights, parent conferences, finals and evaluations have been packed in back-to-back for weeks. Our students seem to require more attention just when our energy is at the year's low point. Winter break comes none too soon.

So, if you are reading this, and are exhausted, know that you are not alone. This "December disillusionment" is a documented phenomenon, especially for newer educators.

Use the break to rest, see friends and family, re-establish a routine, and catch your breath. Enjoy the traditions you celebrate this season. They will serve you well.

And know that the research also shows that things will pick up again soon. With the new year your students will exhibit the breakthroughs you've been waiting for. You will feel the rewards of their success, as well as your own. Though that may be hard to see now, just as certain as the return of the light, so too will your energy and enthusiasm return.

As we look ahead to the New Year, I'd like to remind you of some upcoming opportunities. Nominations and elections for both the WEA Board of Directors and State Delegates to the NEA Representative Assembly will be taking place. There is more information on elections in this issue and I would encourage you to consider running. In addition, many of your locals will be having elections for Delegates to the WEA Representative Assembly in Spokane. If you have never been to a WEA RA, I would highly recommend that you consider running to be a local delegate.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one of you for choosing to serve in a profession that can be simultaneously so rewarding and so frustrating. People who aren't in it don't know, but it truly is the best profession.

Relax, refresh, and I'll see you in the new year.

Cheers!



Larry Delaney
WEA President

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For the first time in decades, Willapa Valley School District tried to ignore the strike and reopen schools with administrative scabs as teachers. The move didn't work. Members from more than 15 WEA locals across southwest Washington, longshore workers from the ILWU, Machinists, United Food and Commercial Workers, Public School Employees and the Washington State Labor Council joined the picket line to support the 25 Willapa Valley teachers.

WEA's 2020 Legislative Priorities

Washington Education Association members are the strongest advocates in the state for making sure all PK-12 and higher education students have access to a quality public education. These are WEA's legislative priorities for 2020:



Promote Equity, Combat Racism, and Eliminate Discrimination

The Washington Constitution guarantees all students a quality public education regardless of school district, socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, immigration status, gender identity, sex, religion, disability, or sexual orientation. WEA supports legislation that promotes equity, eliminates discrimination, and combats racism in our public schools and colleges.

Ensure Safe Public Schools and Campuses for All Students and Staff

Creating a safe learning environment is a critical part of helping all students achieve their full potential. All students and staff have a right to safe public schools and campuses where they can learn and work without fear of aggression, harassment, or violence. WEA supports legislation that guarantees safe public schools and campuses for all students and staff.

Recruit, Retain and Respect Quality Public School Employees and College Faculty

WEA supports high professional standards that recognize the value of experience and education, and we believe educators must have a voice in setting education policy. We also support competitive pay and benefits needed to attract and retain qualified, caring, and committed educators for our students. In addition, we oppose the use of standardized assessments in certification programs. WEA supports legislation that helps and assists educators from their certification programs through retirement and ensures they have a strong voice in education policymaking at every level.

Improve Learning Conditions to Support Student Success

WEA supports high expectations and standards for all students in our public schools and on our college campuses. We also know the learning styles and needs of students vary, as do the challenges each community faces. WEA supports legislation to increase funding for social emotional learning. WEA also supports legislation that increases student learning, supports student health, and eliminates disruptions and other barriers to student success – including unnecessary testing and assessments.

Build Stronger Relationships Between Students, Families, and Educators

Strong personal relationships with caring, professional adults are crucial to student success. WEA supports legislation to reduce class sizes, hire more support staff, fully fund special education, and increase the academic freedom to create opportunities during the school day for educators to build relationships with students, their families, and the communities they serve.

Equity, student safety top WEA's 2020 legislative priorities

Combating racism, promoting equity and eliminating discrimination are among WEA's priorities for the 2020 legislative session.

"Our legislative agenda is focused on providing the funding and support students need to be successful, including attracting and keep qualified educators," said Larry Delaney, WEA president. "This year, we are emphasizing the need for WEA members to promote equity, combat racism and eliminate discrimination in addition to our ongoing work to address student and school safety."

The WEA Board of Directors recently approved WEA's 2020 Legislative Priorities, which are on the OurVoice political action section of the WEA website at www.WashingtonEA.org/OurVoice.

Building stronger relationships among students, families and educators is another WEA priority. That includes reducing class sizes, hiring additional support staff and fully funding special education.

The short, 60-day supplemental budget legislative session begins Jan. 13 and ends March 12. The annual WEA Lobby Day in Olympia is scheduled for Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Jan. 20.

"When it comes to making a difference in the lives of our students, we can't rely on others do this work," Delaney said. "WEA members know that when we stand united together, we can win big victories we couldn't achieve alone."

Auburn High Senior Becky Polley works with individual students on reading and math fluency in Amanda Brooks' class at Dick Scobee Elementary three times a week.



Class helps students learn about teaching and equity

Being a teacher means more than just knowing about the subject you're teaching.

That's one of the lessons Auburn High senior Martha Santos Valdivinos has discovered in her Careers in Education course. For three days a week, she and others from her school hop on a school bus to go to neighboring Dick Scobee Elementary where she gets a hands-on glimpse of what is involved in working in education.

"Before this, I didn't think teachers care," the 17-year-old admits. "Now I know they have to care, and they have to interact with you. Everything is about communication."

Earlier this month, she and classmate Ana Zarate Betancourt worked with two girls on math fractions under the guidance of their mentor teachers Breanna Upchurch and Lindsay Spears. They helped with classroom preparations, checked student work, and sat in the fifth-grade team's planning session. Along the way, they learned classroom management strategies, tackled questions on different student learning styles and tried out ideas for lesson plans.

This year, the Auburn program will get additional support and mentor teachers will receive a stipend for their work for the first time, thanks to a Great Public Schools grant from the National Education Association. The grant, awarded to Puget Sound UniServ, supports mentor teachers in the Careers in Education program so they can assist the next generation of teachers, and hopefully attract future educators of color, says Glenn Jenkins, who submitted the grant application.

"Our district has more than 60 percent students of color," he says. "We've got students who want to be teachers but don't have the support. This a potential recruiting tool."

Students in Auburn receive high school career and technical education credits for the course. In some districts, Teacher Academies and "grow-your-own" initiatives offer college credits to students.

"I just think having the exposure to younger kids is great," Upchurch says. "It's awesome to have this work experience that they can bring with them when they go to college."

Elementary students voluntarily sign up for the 30-minute one-on-one sessions with the high schoolers. They meet during specialists' time such as P.E.

"Honestly, it's been very helpful," Spears says of the program. "It's been cool to watch them (older and younger students). We already have the learning tools and prepared the materials."

As part of the requirement, the high schoolers attend class the other two days and keep a journal and write about themes and observations from their hands-on work at the elementary schools.

Becky Polley, another Auburn High senior, wishes she could have fit the Careers in Education elective into her class schedule earlier. She wants to teach third grade or high school history someday.

"I've always had a good relationship with kids," says Polley while working in Amanda Brooks' classroom. "This gives me an idea of some things to think about."

The Auburn elective isn't just for those interested in becoming educators, says Kelly Jensen, who coordinates the program at Auburn High School. The opportunity to experience what is available is invaluable for all students, she says.

"For kids of color, a lot are not going on (to post-secondary education) because they don't want to be a financial burden on their family," says Jensen, a family consumer sciences teacher. "This course helps them see around their barriers."

It's a source of support, says Jenkins, who stays in touch with recent graduates he mentored.



Left to right: Ana Zarate Betancourt works with a fifth-grader on fractions. Glenn Jenkins shares classroom management strategies with high schooler Gina Delgado.

"The No. 1 reason I went into teaching is because I didn't see anyone like myself," he says. "If we can find ways to try to foster the interest and let students know there's support then we can retain."

Even though this is the second year Santos Valdovinos is taking the elective, she is undecided about becoming a teacher.

"The first week I didn't know what to do and I didn't know how to interact with the students," she says. "Now I like the interactions with the students. I really like the experience."

Jenkins, who was an engineer before becoming a fifth-grade teacher at Dick Scobee, says it's a priority to recruit and support the next generation of educators, particularly students of color.



Advocating for our profession

State Teacher of the Year program elevates educators and provides a platform



Washington State Teacher of the Year Amy Campbell and North Franklin EA's Intervention and Language Support Specialist Rebecca Estock take time to talk at a recent retreat in Seattle. Estock says having time to develop her message as a regional TOY winner helps her gain clarity about the issues she wants to keep at the forefront of education conversations.

Camas Education Association teacher and 2020 Washington State Teacher of the Year Amy Campbell says she received an email, last February, from someone in the district Human Resources Department informing her someone nominated her for Washington State Teacher of the Year.

Campbell, who teaches students with significant learning challenges, says, "I remember reading the email at home and thinking any recognition of me meant recognition of my students, so I thought, why not?"

She filled out the application including five essay questions asking the educator to discuss their work with students, their vision, and the issues they would emphasize as a representative for educators around the state.

The questions gave Campbell time for self-reflection and pushed her to focus on articulating her thoughts. Someone from Education Service District (ESD) 112 observed Campbell's interactions with students. Not every ESD does an observation as part of the selection.

OSPI's Statewide Recognition Coordinator, Hilary Seidel, says that is by design. Seidel is proud that Washington's program is open for anyone to make a nomination.

Seidel says the nine ESDs have some choice on how they select their regional awardees. Once the regional recipients are selected, the nominees are invited to participate in a panel interview.

"They asked policy questions and asked what my platform would be should I be selected as teacher of the year. I just figured whether I get picked or not, this was a chance to share my passion and help me with communicating my message," Campbell says.

While Campbell received recognition in Camas, eight other regional nominees were chosen across the state. Over the summer, teacher of the year (TOY) nominees have the chance to revise their essays.



Washington State TOY Amy Campbell says she has never met a teacher who doesn't want every single student to succeed. Highline EA's Reed Sundblad says being a regional TOY winner is allowing him to bring attention to the importance of building compassion in students through genuine teacher/student connections.

In early September, the regional nominees come together for a few days to spend time with the State TOY selection committee members who represent at least one former TOY, students, parents, labor (including a WEA representative — usually the vice president), administrators and other community stakeholders. Nominees spend a day honing their communications skills, presenting a short keynote, reacting to scenarios, speaking at a mock press conference and more. This prepares them for upcoming public speaking opportunities. The committee then has a difficult decision-making task.

After the final selection is made, it is placed in a sealed envelope and nominees spend the rest of retreat developing deeper relationships and forming a close-knit cadre. OSPI does not have a representative on the selection committee nor do they tell the teachers what to say.

“The educators all have the right to speak independently,” Seidel says. The Teacher of the Year program is about recognizing accomplished educators and lifting them up so they can have a platform to share their thinking.”

Once the State TOY is announced in September, the regional selectees are still very involved. They attend two days of professional development in

Seattle where they prepare for working with the Legislature, sharing their stories, choosing how they will address issues in their own district and continuing to develop their individual messages.

For Rebecca Estock, an elementary intervention and language support specialist and North Franklin Education Association member, it has been a wonderful experience.

“Sometimes, we want to be comfortable with complacency and this experience is pushing me to step outside my comfort zone, push forward, address the changes I want to see and gain a deeper understanding of policy that impacts our students,” Estock says. One thing she says that she takes back to her students from her experience, so far, is “don't be afraid to do hard things.”

Even though Port Angeles EA elementary teacher Kathryn Lebus Hartman has a friend who was a finalist last year, she still didn't realize the magnitude of what it meant to become a regional finalist.

“Mostly, I'm excited about having a platform where I can share my message,” she says. She is focusing on helping teachers and other educators bring more consistency to students who experience the long-term effects of complex traumas. As a foster parent who adopted two older children, she experiences that issue through the lens of a teacher and a parent.



Washington's TOY and regional winners attend a recent training to prepare for public speaking engagements. Top left to right: Rebecca Estock (North Franklin), Amy Campbell (Camas), Reid Sunblad (Highline), Malia Renner-Singer (Cascade) and Analisa McCann (Central Valley). Bottom left to right, Kathryn Lebus Hartman (Port Angeles) and Lisa Summers (Tumwater). Not pictured: Tamara Caraballo (Snohomish) and Stephanie King (Granger).



Left: Port Angeles EA's Kathryn Lebuis Hartman says she is excited about the platform the Washington State Teacher of the Year program offers her and the other TOY recipients to share what they are thinking. Right: Tumwater P.E. Teacher Lisa Summers practices sharing her message in an onscreen interview. Summers is instilling values in her students that promote health and fitness long after they leave school.

Cascade Education Association high school teacher Malia Renner-Singer is focusing on increasing access to and navigating the process of applying to college for first generation and other marginalized students, but also making sure they complete their college degree.

Highline EA member middle school PE teacher Reid Sundblad is focusing on emphasizing the power of building authentic relationships with students. His boys' group, Los Siete, encourages boys to allow themselves to be vulnerable, share their emotions and support one another. He wants to bring more attention to boys in education, particularly boys of color who are disproportionately being singled out and "written up."

Analisa McCann, a Central Valley EA member and first-grade teacher, is passionate about making sure educators have a deeper understanding of childhood trauma and the ways students exhibit those traumas.

"We need to approach discipline by being trauma invested," McCann says. "The reality is that kids are coming to our schools with so many different

experiences. We often get hung up with the behavior instead of the why."

Raising awareness among educators to better understand student trauma and helping to build an intrinsic belief among educators that all students can be academically successful by helping build coping skills, tolerance and resilience for everyone at school is a common message among several Washington teachers of the year.

Campbell says what is working at her school is giving all students the chance to have a hand in creating a safe environment.

"If we see my students as being part of the larger system then focusing in on their unique needs — allowing me to serve them within a more specific framework, then we are all an intricate part of a school-wide plan that

works," she says. Campbell says she is excited to share the message that her students with special needs — like all students — do not come with deficits, but instead can learn in a world of opportunity and possibility.

Any recognition of teachers is good. While the honor exists, the reality is the TOY program allows us to elevate and support each other.

Amy Campbell
2020 Washington State
Teacher of the Year



Striking Sumner paras win 12.5 percent pay increase

Willapa Valley EA members strike, too

After a four-day strike in October, members of the Sumner Paraeducator Association (SPA) approved a new contract that includes an overall pay increase of 12.5 percent in the first year.

“We are ecstatic,” said paraeducator Shontay Krystofiak.

In rural Raymond near the Pacific Coast in southwest Washington, the 25 members of the Willapa Valley Education Association went on strike the week after Thanksgiving. They struck for nearly two weeks before winning a three-year deal with higher pay and other concessions from their school board and administration. Showing their disregard for students and teachers, district administrators opened the high school and tried to hold classes with non-union scab educators. (You can imagine how chaotic that was.)

Prior to their strike, the 200 or so paraeducators in the Sumner-Bonney Lake School District in Pierce County were among the lowest-paid support professionals in their area – despite their important work with special education students and other students who need additional support. While pay raises varied based on position and experience, the agreement represents a major increase in compensation. This year was Sumner Paraeducator Association’s first opportunity to negotiate competitive pay related to the Supreme Court’s McCleary decision.

Certificated members of the Sumner Education Association voted unanimously to support their striking classified colleagues, forcing district administrators to close school. Teamsters, SEIU, firefighters and other unions also supported the

Sumner-Bonney Lake paraeducators went on strike for four days in late October over a pay increase for fair wages. The teachers’ union, Summer Education Association, voted to not cross the picket line, forcing the district to close the school. Members of the Summer Paraeducator Association ratified a three-year contract that includes a first-year average pay increase of 12.5%, plus 2% more in year 2, and an inflation increase in year 3.

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connected to WEA.

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OFFICIAL NOTICE

This is official notice that Washington Education Association will run nominations and elections for the following positions. More detailed information on each of these positions can be found at <https://www.WashingtonEA.org/elections>.

NEA State Director
(one position available)

WEA UniServ Council Director to the Board

NEA State Delegate

NEA State Delegate At-Large
(reserved for the WEA President, WEA Vice President and current NEA State Directors only)

NOMINATIONS

Nominations will open **Jan. 19-Feb. 2, 2020**. Nominations will be submitted online only (no paper documents will be accepted).

This page <https://www.WashingtonEa.org/elections> will also be the location you go to beginning on Jan. 19, 2020 to submit your online nomination.

All nominations must be made by a member of the Washington Education Association in good standing. **To be eligible for any position the nominee must be an active member in good standing.**

Please note: Student WEA (SWEA) members and WEA-Retired members hold their own separate elections for representation on the WEA Board of Directors and NEA Delegates.

ELECTION

This election for WEA UniServ Council Director to the Board and NEA State Delegate and Delegate At-Large shall be by secret ballot vote via an online election website. The election of the NEA State Director will occur at the 2020 WEA Representative Assembly in April 2020.

Elections will be held only for those positions for which the number of nominated candidates exceeds the number of seats to be filled. The election for these contested positions will be held:

Feb. 9, 2020 at 8 a.m. through March 1, 2020 (Midnight)

Candidates for uncontested positions will be deemed elected by acclamation.

WEA UniServ Council Directors to the Board will be elected by a 50 percent +1 majority of votes cast. A majority of the votes cast is not required for the seating of delegates to the WEA and NEA Representative Assemblies. These elections will be held in accordance with the WEA and NEA Constitutions and Bylaws.

The election will be held by electronic ballot. All eligible members will receive an email containing their election credentials.

The WEA Nominations and Elections Chair will receive the online election results on March 2, 2020 and will report these results to the WEA President.

OFFICIAL NOTICE

RUN-OFF ELECTION (if necessary)

In the event no candidate in a contested election receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off election will be held between the candidates receiving the most votes.

If necessary, run-off elections will be held online:

March 8, 2020 at 8 a.m. through March 22, 2020 (Midnight)

The WEA Nominations and Elections Chair will receive the online run-off election results on March 23, 2020 and will report these results to the WEA President.

The chart below indicates how many positions are tentatively available in each WEA UniServ Council. These numbers are an estimate at this time. Official numbers are received from the NEA on/about Jan. 15, 2020. Updated numbers based on official membership data from NEA will be posted on the website.

Council	Membership Total as of Dec 2019	WEA Board 1:1500	NEA State Delegate 1:1000
Kent	1,854	1	1
Lake Washington	2,062	1	2
North Central WEA	3,468	2	3
Pilchuck	4,952	3	4
Puget Sound	5,288	3	5
Rainier	3,856	2	3
Seattle	5,663	3	5
Soundview	2,327	1	2
Spokane	3,201	2	3
Summit	3,832	2	3
Vancouver	1,598	1	1
WEA-Cascade	5,097	3	5
WEA Chinook	5,804	3	5
WEA Eastern Wash.	4,663	3	4
WEA Fourth Corner	5,271	3	5
WEA-Lower Columbia	1,789	1	1
WEA MidState	4,720	3	4
WEA Olympic	5,214	3	5
WEA-Riverside	4,739	3	4
WEA-Sammamish	4,717	3	4
WEA-Southeast	5,136	3	5
WEA-Tacoma	2,236	1	2

Carolina Borrego, Lake Washington Education Support Professionals president, addresses members and supporters on the 100th day of working without a contract. The district's secretaries, health room staff and other office professionals gathered for a rally at the district administrative office before the Dec. 9 school board meeting. Lake Washington ESP members have been working without a contract since Aug. 31. The district administration refuses to negotiate fair and competitive pay raises. Members will meet Jan. 7 to either ratify a contract or to vote on further action.



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paraeducator strike. In Willapa Valley, members from more than 15 WEA locals across southwest Washington, longshore workers from the ILWU, Machinists, United Food and Commercial Workers, Public School Employees and the Washington State Labor Council joined the picket lines.

Meanwhile, members of the Lake Washington Education Support Professionals (LWESP) union are continuing their fight for competitive compensation and a fair contract. As office professionals, they help ensure Lake Washington schools function. Yet their administration refuses to negotiate the professional pay raises they deserve.

This also is LWESP's "McCleary" bargain.

In Vancouver, members of the Clark College AHE faculty union are also fighting for better pay. They've

been without a new contract since last year, and like K-12 administrators in Lake Washington, college administrators refuse to negotiate competitive pay raises for faculty members – even though they have the money. Clark faculty have authorized their executive committee to call a strike that could start after their next bargaining session on Dec. 27.

Union members in both Lake Washington and Vancouver are ramping up their organizing efforts knowing they have the full support of WEA and educators across the state.

“Faculty pay at Clark College is not competitive with other colleges, the private sector or K-12 school districts,” said Suzanne Southerland, Clark College AHE president.