



Together, we do great things.

We share a desire for safety, security and success our lives. Together, we have a positive impact on our students and ourselves – whether creating a safe setting for our students, securing health care for our families and our colleagues, or ensuring livable wages. Let's celebrate our progress and build on our success.

Kim's Holiday Wish List

- 1 I wish that each of you knew how much I value what you do each and every day.

Our union is made up of individuals who are passionate about public education. The outside world would be surprised to know how many different professions come together to meet the needs of students. The education settings are unique and the education positions in those settings will not be the same across districts or across higher education campuses. Even though we are unique, we share the same desire to help students achieve.

One of the difficult tasks that I face is to help every single one of you know how much you are valued. The moment I name one of the many areas that we have expertise, I run the risk of appearing to not value another education position. I value each and every education profession. Please accept my apology if you have ever felt slighted by my omissions. None of us can do the work without the other.

- 2 I wish that each of you end the calendar year relaxed and filled with hope.

At this time of year, I know how hard it is for many students across our state. Some are nervous, contemplating what it will be like to visit the parent they don't normally see or being left alone because of a guardian/parent that must work. Others know that the meals they count on will be missing. Some are afraid. Some are excited. The adults they interact with see all of these emotions and tensions. You, each of you, are the backstops for students. You are there to listen, and to reach

out to each other for help. You can't fix every situation, but when students know you care, it will help more than you might imagine. So, when the last student leaves for break, my hope is that you take the time to relax, reflect and rejuvenate over the next few weeks.

- 3 I wish that next year will be even more successful than this year.

I know that wish may seem like I'm asking for the moon, but it depends on your definition of success. We came together to make gains in funding, and we still have work to do in that area at many bargaining tables. We also have work to do around higher education as well as retired educator needs. And the list doesn't end there. Maybe it would be better to say that I wish for each of you to feel better off than the year before.

- 4 I wish that the saying: "If you can't say something nice ..." or "Do unto others ..." became popular as a practice once again.

Differences of opinion are important to share to help each of us grow as individuals. Creating a "storm in a teacup" just for fun is the type of behavior we help our students understand as being bullied.

- 5 Last but not least, I wish that each of you see what I see.

Thank you. Thank you for being such wonderful people. Thank you for being heroes. Thank you for being the WEA.



Kim Mead, WEA President



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Goals for the 2019 legislative session include a strong focus on school safety, funding needs

Headed into the 2019 legislative session, Washington Education Association members continue to stand united for our public schools and students.

As professional educators and union members, WEA members are proud of our state's historic progress toward fully funding public education and the gains many of us won at the bargaining table this year. Standing united together as a union, we've been able to accomplish great things we wouldn't be able to do alone.

Now we must protect our progress and build on our success. In November, the WEA Board of Directors adopted WEA's 2019 legislative priorities, which include a strong focus on healthy students and safe schools. WEA members and students identified school safety needs in a series of meetings WEA President Kim Mead and Gov. Jay Inslee convened earlier this year.

It's simple — our students can't learn unless they have safe schools.

That's why we are urging the Washington Legislature and Gov. Inslee to fund additional counselors, psychologists, nurses, therapists, social workers and other mental health services for all students in every public school.

Besides school safety, two of WEA's top legislative priorities for 2019 are related to improving or implementing the McCleary school funding package the Legislature adopted in 2017 and 2018:

- Restore much-needed local levy flexibility to allow local voters to meet the needs of their students beyond state-funded basic education, including investments in school safety. Legislators also need to revisit salary regionalization and how experience is factored into teacher salaries.
- Support healthy families by fully funding the new state-run health insurance system for teachers and other school employees as negotiated with the state.

Beyond K-12 public schools, WEA members stand united to increase funding for public colleges and universities and to ensure the financial security of retired educators.

The November general election helped strengthen the pro-student, pro-union majority in the Washington House and Senate. WEA-PAC and WEA members played a major role in several key races, including electing soon-to-be House members Bill Ramos and Lisa Callan in the Issaquah area, Representative-elect Mari Leavitt in University Place and Emily Randall to the state Senate in the Gig Harbor area.

Two WEA members were elected to the state House: Republican Matt Boehnke in the Tri-Cities and Democrat Sharon Shewmake in Whatcom County. Both are higher education faculty members, and they will join several incumbent legislators who also are WEA members.

WEA works with our union allies on electoral and legislative priorities. During the fall 2018 election, WEA worked with the Washington State Labor Council and coalition of other unions to support pro-labor candidates. WEA is proud that this collaboration resulted in electing more pro-labor, pro-education voices to the Legislature — and we are pleased that it also resulted in more diversity in the Legislature. Also of note, WEA and AFT Washington supported I-1639, for common-sense gun regulations, which was approved by voters.

Just as we have for years, WEA continues to work with union allies on issues that we have in common, including union rights, workplace safety and economic justice. We also expect our union allies to support our safe schools proposals and employee health care agreement in the upcoming legislative session.

To read, download or print WEA's 2019 Legislative Priorities, visit www.washingtonea.org/ourvoice/2019-legislative-goals.

Ways to advocate for safety in our schools



Effectively maintaining and improving school safety involves the efforts of educators, parents, students, community members and elected officials working together. WEA will hold a one-day conference Feb. 2, 2019 to help WEA members advocate for student safety in a variety of ways — whether in Olympia, with parents and our communities or at the bargaining table. The day will feature speeches by educators, other experts and elected officials, and include learning tracks with breakout sessions focused on:

- Influencing Olympia — and what's being proposed in the Legislature this year to support safer schools
- Engaging parents, community members, allies, news media and others in school safety topics
- Learning about programs and approaches for schools to address a variety of topics including behavior programs, school discipline, immigration, bullying, etc.
- Bargaining and best practices for contract language that make classrooms and schools safer for students, teachers and classified staff

The conference will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Seattle Airport. Keynote speakers include state Attorney General Bob Ferguson, Gov. Jay Inslee, and National Teacher of the Year and Spokane educator Mandy Manning. For more information and to register, visit www.washingtonea.org/safety.

Giving ^{the} gift of reading

"This is an amazing way to fuel not only my own reading, but my two brothers' as well ... I'd love to surprise them with a gift like that."

"I think the gift of literacy is a powerful one," says a Garfield High School student in a letter written to Seattle Education Association member and English teacher Adam Gish. The student was one of nearly 100 who participated in a unique field trip last month.

Gish, who has taught at Garfield for 17 years and at Madison Middle School for six years before that, often asks his students, which of them have ever stepped foot in a book store. He has memories of reading — a few beloved books repeatedly while growing up and says he believes every child, every person ought to personally own at least a few books. So, Gish did what most teachers do when they see a need — he took one student one year or a small group of students another year to Elliott Bay Book Co. (sometimes followed by

a meal in a nearby restaurant) and gave them \$25 to select a few books to take home.

It wasn't something he did every year, but it was something he really enjoyed doing, when he could, because, he says, high school students, in their own way, are just as vulnerable — perhaps even more vulnerable than younger kids. Gish was talking about this with a friend who asked, "what if you made this bigger?" The friend made an anonymous donation to allow Gish to enable more students to pick out their own books. Then, another donor sweetened the pot. What started off with a few students grew exponentially thanks to the two donors.

Gish mentioned the field trip opportunity to his own students then to other ninth-grade language arts teachers then he opened it to 10th-graders, and finally, to everyone in the school. Students were asked to write a letter to Gish about why they wanted the opportunity to own a few books.

"Although my parents are willing to buy books for me, it often means we have to put something else on hold," one student said. That student was selected to participate.

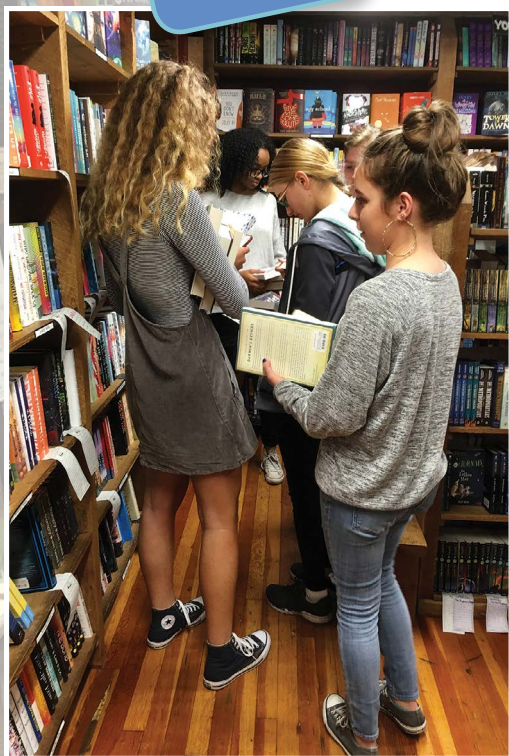
"I'm not saying there's anything wrong with checking out books but it's just different from owning your own books that you can just take off yourself and read anytime," wrote another student who was selected.

"In recent years, the books I've read have taught me to be strong, independent, compassionate ... another important thing books have given me is queer representation ... I am hoping to expand my collection of books with queer characters," wrote another who was selected.

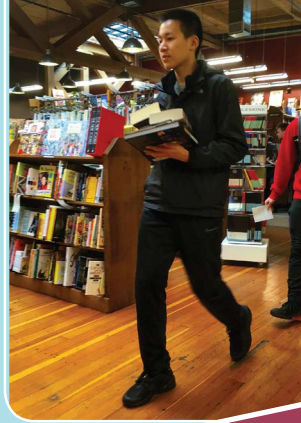
"I love to sink into a different world that the bare bones have been laid out for you to animate with your imagination ... but if you saw it fit to give the gift card to someone else, then I wouldn't be upset, because someone else will be able to experience the wonder of books," wrote one more student who was selected to participate.

In the end, *every* student who wrote a letter ended up boarding one of three school buses headed for the bookstore. Gish said that when you peel back the layers of the field trip — the parts where students got the gift card, looked through shelves of brand-new books, made their selection and purchased the books — the field trip was far richer than that.

Students from so many cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds engaged in brief and passionate



"It was very liberating to find books that interested me."



Seattle high-school teacher Adam Gish shares the wonder of books with Garfield High students on a recent field trip to buy books.

discussions with one another and with teachers and other field trip chaperones about books.

The students figured out ways to buy twice as many books by agreeing to trade with one another. They pooled left over money to purchase one more book for someone or pay for one that was a little bit more expensive to make sure everyone got books they wanted.

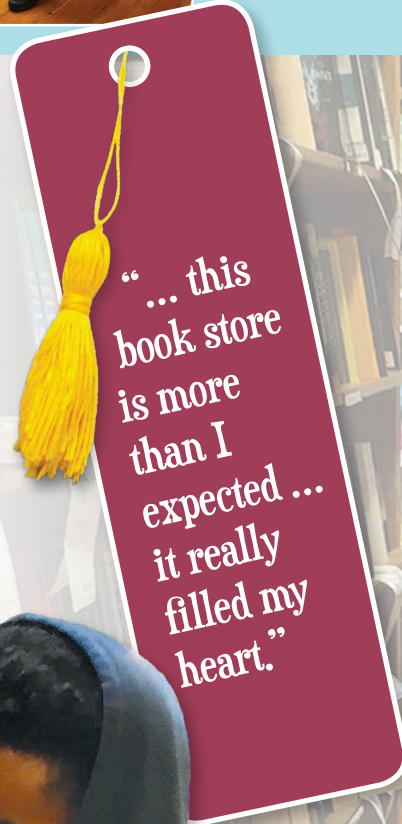
“The effect the trip had on adults was as profound or maybe more profound than it was for the kids,” Gish says. “The discussions blew holes in all kinds of perceptions about teenagers.”

Gish says he loved watching students have the complete freedom to choose whatever books they wanted. He also realized, for what he says was the 9,585,045 time, that sometimes the students who are often the biggest mischief makers are also the ones who have the keenest intuition.

And sweetening the day even more, Molly Moon’s Homemade Ice Cream provided everyone with a cup of ice cream to end the field trip. Students were grateful with the abundance they received.

“I am very humbled by all the kindness I experienced today,” one student said.

Gish says he believes the momentum is there to keep this annual field trip afloat. Next year, he’ll give students more time to make their selections. It’s just about designing the next iteration, he says.



OFFICIAL NOTICE

This is official notice that the Washington Education Association will run nominations and elections for the following positions:

WEA President

WEA Vice-President

NEA State Director
(three positions available)

Nominations are open now and will close with the closing of nominations during the second business session of the WEA Representative Assembly.

The official nominations packet, nomination forms and campaign and election regulations can be found at <https://www.washingtonnea.org/we-are-wea/ra/2018-wea-union-elections/>

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 a member in good standing.

The delegates to the 2019 WEA Representative Assembly in April 2019 will elect these positions.

With full WEA support, ESP members make salary gains — and some are still negotiating

During the summer and fall, teacher contract negotiations, pay raises and strikes won a lot of media attention.

Just as importantly, many of WEA's education support professional (ESP) unions were negotiating pay raises at the same time — and some are still in negotiations four months into the new school year.

ESP members in some school districts negotiated pay raises in the double-digit percentages this year. In Clover Park, support staff won an average pay raise of 12.3 percent. Pullman secretaries negotiated a pay raise of 17.6 percent. And in Spokane, nutrition workers represented by WEA won a 27 percent raise and a maximum hourly salary of \$30.46.

It took a major fight to get district administrators in Port Angeles to pass through the McCleary school funding money for salaries, as intended by the Supreme Court, governor and Legislature. Paraeducators in Port Angeles voted to strike if the district would not increase its salary offer. The para union worked to ensure that teachers, who had settled earlier, would not cross their picket lines, forcing schools to close during the two-day strike in November.

The new contract gives paraeducators a raise of about 15 percent over three years, and includes longevity bonuses for employees with 15 and 20 years' experience. In addition, some existing bonuses were rolled into the base salary, which increases the dollar value of future percentage-based raises. By the third year of the contract, pay for new paras will be \$20 per hour, and 20-year veterans will be paid \$26.14, plus any state inflation adjustments.

"A 15-percent increase over the next three years is great!" said Port Angeles Paraeducators Association Co-President Trix Donohue. "We started off at 1.9 percent, with one year only, and the district really wanting quite a bit (back) from us."

In North Thurston, office professionals were two days away from going on strike when district administrators finally offered an acceptable pay raise.

"Our members work hard to make sure all North Thurston students have the support and services they need to be successful," said North Thurston Office and Technical Professionals union Co-President Kristi Ashmore. "We're an integral part of our school district. We deserve competitive, professional pay."

ESP members in Yakima, Vancouver, Tumwater and other districts were still in negotiations as of mid-December. Thanks to recently expanded collective bargaining rights, WEA members at some community and technical colleges

have negotiated large pay raises as well. Faculty at Bellevue College, for example, ratified a new contract earlier this month that calls for pay raises of approximately 10 percent for full-time faculty members, which includes a guaranteed increment within the span of two years.

"By negotiating the competitive, professional pay that all school employees deserve, we are demonstrating the value and relevance of union membership and the power that comes from standing united together," WEA President Kim Mead said.



More than 100 Port Angeles paraeducators went on strike over wages last month with the support of teachers who refused to cross their picket lines, forcing the school district to cancel all classes.



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Association



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We 2.0 (ISSN 1544-5283) is published quarterly by the Washington Education Association, 32032 Weyerhaeuser Way S., Federal Way, WA 98001-9687. Subscription cost of \$0.80 is included in annual membership dues. Separate subscription price: \$15.50 annually.

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Periodical nonprofit postage paid at Auburn, WA, and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *We 2.0*, P.O. Box 9100, Federal Way, WA 98063-9100.



Sparks: Helping light the fire of diversity in WEA

We are stronger when we are all together.

It's a union truism. And it's a truth that, too often, has been overlooked or ignored through institutional racism, unintentional implicit bias, or a failure to intentionally, proactively engage with educators of color and minority cultures. Washington's schools face a huge deficit in the ratio of educators of color compared to students of color. Encouraging more educators of color to work in our state, and helping retain those who already are working here, will help reduce that deficit.

"Diversity makes people better," notes Naché Duncan, WEA's Coordinator for Student Programs, ESP and Early Career Educators. "The more you know the more you grow."

That is the backdrop for this year's Diversity Sparks, a conference sponsored by WEA for early career educators. Diversity Sparks is part of a conscious effort by the Association to help newer educators succeed in their classrooms, learn about their union, and to create avenues to identify and mentor new leaders.

"The goal of diversity sparks is to really engage our early career educators of color," Duncan says. To do that, Sparks offers a custom agenda driven by the interests and needs of each year's individual participants, typically members with five years' experience or less. This year, members wanted to focus on classroom management and, especially, culturally responsive classroom management.

Sparks participant Elizabeth Capetillo says she shares those interests: "Anything I can do to

promote more teachers of color, I'm all for it."

As an English Language teacher from Selah, Capetillo says a lot of her job includes advocating for students of color at her school.

"I'm hoping to learn more about restorative justice," the fourth-year teacher said. "The other reason I came here is to learn more about leadership roles in WEA."

Topics this year included culturally responsive classroom management, a mix of basic unionism FAQs, and a "True Colors" exercise that helps identify differing temperaments and behavior styles so that participants can gain a more inciteful understanding of themselves, their colleagues and their students, and then use strategies to work successfully among those differences. Aaron Dorsey, a trainer from NEA's Center for Social Justice, led a session on restorative justice practices that focused on creating environments so that all participants can feel safe while finding resolutions to address wrongdoing, repair harm and restore relationships.

The training concludes with Sparks participants joining a weekend Human and Civil Rights Leadership Conference at WEA's main office in Federal Way.



Newer educators of color attend Diversity Sparks earlier this month in SeaTac to combat institutional racism and focus on restorative justice practices. The WEA conference is part of a conscious effort by the Association to help early career educators succeed in their classrooms, learn about their union, and to create avenues to identify and mentor new leaders.



Olympia educator receives Fulbright Distinguished Award in Teaching

For six years, Jana Dean was the lead teacher and program developer of the Jefferson Accelerated Math and Science Program at Jefferson Middle School in Olympia. In 2016, she was named the Washington state recipient of the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching, which is a program administered by the National Science Foundation on behalf of the White House Office of Science and Technology. A few months ago, Dean, who now teaches math, health and study skills at Reeves Middle School, learned she had received a Fulbright Distinguished Award in Teaching.

As a Fulbright Award recipient, Dean will be in the Netherlands for six months. She seeks to learn how Dutch math teachers meet the needs of immigrant students while keeping lessons rigorous, relevant and engaging. The Dutch teachers she will work with are in a tradition of connecting math instruction to students' imaginations and lived experience. In addition to improving her own practice, her goal is to help other educators inspire confidence and competence in the next generation. Her work focuses on the role of public school classrooms in opening doors for underrepresented students.

WEA was fortunate enough to catch Dean before she embarked on her fellowship in January 2019.

Q: When did you first realize your passion for teaching (or your passion for teaching math)?

A: I didn't know I would end up specializing in math. When I first started teaching, I already knew that I didn't want to be the kind of teacher who demanded memorization from my students. I wanted to give them hands-on and heartfelt experiences that from which they could create their own understandings. In the 1990s, when I started, the math standards most lent themselves to that kind of teaching, so in what was becoming, like it or not, an increasingly standards-driven profession, I gravitated to math. Also, math class was the place I was most likely to hear students exclaim their delight at a personal breakthrough.

Q: What is the best part about teaching math?

A: Mathematics, like poetry, is a language. When students begin to defend their mathematical ideas they are getting access to a powerful language for describing the world.

Math class can be a place rich in learning how to listen to each other and to see the world and the ways of numbers from other people's point of view. As such, teaching math is teaching empathy and perspective-taking.

Q: What one thing would you like to change about the way we teach math to students?

A: Math should always be about solving problems and never about getting answers. Students should be finding and defending answers that make sense to them rather than pursuing answers that have been hidden from view by their text or their teacher.

Q: What do you say to people who say, "I am not a math person"?

A: Everyone is a math person, as much as everyone is a language person. It may be that until now, math class has not worked for you, but that is about math class, not about math itself. Next, I get out a game to play or puzzle to solve or a picture to think about using the language of mathematics.

Q: Did you select the Netherlands for the semester research program? What do you hope to find and see in the Netherlands?

A: I selected the Netherlands because of the Dutch tradition of connecting math to students' imaginations and lived experiences. In addition, like the United States, the majority of students there attend public schools and like U.S. schools, Dutch schools serve immigrant and language-minority and culturally diverse communities. I want to learn how Dutch teachers adapt their practices to serve the diverse communities attending their schools.

Q: What will you share about your public schools experience with educators there?

A: I will share how inspiring it is to come together at a faculty each fall and work together to support every single child to succeed each year. I will share that I am surrounded by talented and hard-working colleagues in my school and in my district. I will share that our public schools, while not perfect, are the cornerstone of our centuries-old attempt at democracy. I will share that in spite of every communities' dependence on and support of its public schools, we struggle for adequate funding and against privatization. I will share that our unions are essential in elevating our profession and protecting us from decisions and practices that would undermine our capacity to teach and serve our communities.