

NORTHSHORE NEWS

April, 2007

NORTHSHORE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Issue 8



NSEA Calendar

April 2007

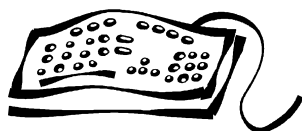
- ◆ April 16th: Rep Council Meeting, 4:00-6:00 pm BHS Library
- ◆ April 24th: NSD School Board Meeting, 7:00 pm Admin Center

May 2007

- ◆ May 7th: Exec Board Meeting, 4:00 pm-6:00 pm NSEA Office
- ◆ May 8th-10th: NSEA Elections
- ◆ May 8th: NSD School Board Meeting, 4:00 pm, BHS
- ◆ May 8th: C.P. Johnson Award Ceremony, 5:30 pm, Northshore Performing Arts Center
- ◆ May 14th: Rep Council Meeting, 4:00-6:00 pm, BHS Library
- ◆ May 22nd: NSD School Board Meeting, 7:00 pm Admin Center
- ◆ May 28th: Memorial Day
- ◆ May 31st: NSD Retirement Ceremony

June 2007

- ◆ June 4th: Executive Board Meeting, 4:00 pm-6:00 pm NSEA Office
- ◆ June 11th: Rep Council Meeting, 4:00-6:00 pm, BHS Library
- ◆ June 12th: NSD School Board Meeting, 4:00 pm Admin Center
- ◆ June 26th: NSD School Board Meeting, 7:00 pm Admin Center



New Anti-Cyberstalking Rules

NSEA worked successfully with the district to craft language concerning the growing problem of "cyberstalking", sexual harassment via email, phony Myspace websites, false text messaging, and other technology-based misconduct that threatens a certificated employee's safety and/or professional reputation.

The district also agreed to clarify the rights of certificated staff members in student discipline matters. This information was shared with all district administrators.

Please see www.northshoreea.org for this new language.

President's Message

Happy Spring! The snow is over I think!

I want to thank the hundreds of members across the district who turned in their number stories as part of our **Take The Lead Banner** activity to inform our legislators of the funding crisis in our schools. These stories were, in the words of one parent, "gut wrenching". We are approaching close to 400 stories that paint a very clear picture of the effects of the under funding of public education in our state. These stories were used on the banners at the **legislative town hall meeting** on March 17th. NSEA members packed the meeting and spent an extra hour and a half with our legislators discussing the funding crisis. The stories were filled with facts and passion! What a powerful message!



I spent two days lobbying in Olympia on topics such as **class size, compensation, funding formulas, and our retirement plans**. Most of the time was spent advocating for the continuance of **gainsharing** in our retirement system. The conversation was made even more difficult by the other state labor groups in this retirement system willing to give up gainsharing. It was very frustrating.

The **budget cuts**, due to the lack of adequate funding from the state, are beginning to be felt in our classrooms. With 87% of the operating budget for NSD tied up in salaries, it is inevitable that these cuts will now be felt by classroom teachers. One proposed cut is to library secretary hours. These are currently being cut back resulting in the loss of coverage in some schools. Even though this is a different labor group, NSEA members are directly impacted. NSEA will be discussing with the district how this will affect the workload for our elementary librarians. With another \$3,000,000 in cuts forecast for the 2008-2009 school year, the impacts on our classrooms could be felt even more.

NSEA held two **retirement seminars** in March that were filled to capacity. When we first offered these seminars, we thought we would only offer one this year. The response was overwhelming and we have scheduled three for this year! Members have expressed how much they appreciate the format and location of these seminars as well as the excellent information! If you are new to the profession, mid-career, or near retirement these seminars are for you! Please watch for our scheduling of these next year and sign up early!

NSEA elections will be held May 8-10. In this election there are leadership, Executive Board, and Contract Maintenance positions open. Please be watching for campaign flyers and possible visits from candidates to your school.

Try to make the best of the **WASL season** that is upon us. I know you will try to make this as easy on your students as possible. Hopefully, improvements in the use of the WASL for graduation will not be far off. It is my hope that parts of the implementation of the WASL for graduation will at least be postponed for now, with the ultimate goal being to eliminate the WASL as a graduation requirement.

Important Calendar Update

The NSD recently received a **waiver** from the state for the make-up of December 15, 2006. As you remember, this was the day school was closed due to the wind storm. This waiver means that **students do not have to make-up the time but staff still must work**. Rather than having staff come to school on June 27th, NSEA has negotiated a simple sign off for hours worked above the contracted day at any point in the year. **In other words, we received recognition for the hours we already put in fulfilling required work.**

Your building reps have an example of the reporting form to be completed. On the form these hours are referred to as **Professional Hours**. The other hours that were already negotiated by NSEA to make-up for missed time are referred to on the form as **Flexible Work Hours**. While NSEA members already filled out one form for the completion of these hours it will simplify the work of the NSD with state auditors next year if we have one reporting form for both days.

If you work less than full time, you will only have to make up the proportion of hours for which you are contracted to work. For instance in each situation you are required to make up 7 hours if you are a full time employee. If you work a .6 contract you multiple .6 by 7 hours to figure out that you must work 4.2 hours of the required 7 hours.

NSEA sought to give our members flexibility on the completion of this time. **NSEA Lead Bargainer Annor Benson** and **President Tim Brittell** were pleased that the NSD agreed to honor the hours already worked by NSEA members. Reporting forms will be sent out soon from the NSD HR Department.

Members Tell Their Stories



The largest legislative town hall meeting in recent memory for the First Legislative District was held on March 17, 2007 on the UW-Bothell campus. Due to the large number of NSEA members attending this meeting, twice the number of chairs that had originally been set up had to be brought in to accommodate the crowd. NSEA Take The Lead banners covered the walls of the meeting room and were an instant draw to community members attending this meeting. Many comments of complete shock were voiced by community members. They never thought that teachers in NSD were experiencing these kinds of problems. Legislators Rosemary McAuliffe, Al O'Brien, and Mark Ericks were present and agreed to stay longer to hear concerns of NSEA members.

Numerous stories were shared with the legislators to paint a clear picture of the effects of under funding in NSD. NSEA member and Special Education teacher **Beth Nelson** gave one of the best and most gut wrenching stories of the day. NSEA members turned out for this meeting even though it was the end of the elementary grading period, on a Saturday, and the beginning of the Little League season. This was another step in NSEA painting a clear picture of the problems we are facing daily on both a personal and professional basis due to the lack of adequate funding. NSEA will continue the fight until adequate funding is attained!

WEA-RA Update

At the annual Representative Assembly in Tacoma, WEA members elected new leadership and reaffirmed their opposition to using the WASL test to make high-stakes decisions about students and schools.

Delegates elected Mercer Island teacher Mary Lindquist to a two-year term as WEA president. Lindquist currently serves as president of the Mercer Island Education Association and the WEA Sammamish Council. She will take office in July. Current WEA President Charles Hasse has served six years and was barred by term limits from running for reelection.

Lindquist vowed to continue WEA's focus on improving school funding and changing the way the WASL is used. "We should not support any single high-stakes test, not for fourth graders, not for seventh graders and certainly not to determine who graduates from our high schools," Lindquist said. "As WEA president, I also will ensure our organization always fights for adequate lifelong compensation for all educators."

Kennewick High School physics teacher Mike Ragan was elected WEA vice president. Ragan currently serves as president of the WEA-Southeast Council in the Tri-Cities. He will replace WEA Vice President Dave Scott in July.

Everett Education Association President Kim Mead was elected to serve on the National Education Association Board of Directors.

Delegates also approved an open letter to Superintendent of Public Instruction Terry Bergeson that urges her to stop using the WASL to make "high-stakes decisions such as grade retention, graduation and program options." The letter calls the current WASL-based student assessment system unfair, misleading, inaccurate, troubling and harmful to students.

Tim Brittell co-sponsored a new business item that was passed by delegates directing WEA to study and make available to the public and WEA members the true total cost of administering the WASL each year. This includes the purchase of the exam, mailing, administration, and scoring of this high stakes test.

Delegates also approved motions in support of modifying the No Child Left Behind act and making substantial improvements in educators' pensions. Educator compensation remains WEA's No. 1 priority.

At a lunchtime rally at a nearby plaza, WEA members urged the state Legislature to increase funding for public schools, including smaller class sizes and educator salaries, health benefits and pensions. Washington's annual spending per student is 42nd in the nation.

Classifieds

FOR RENT: Furnished 1 bedroom apartment in Wedgewood (North Seattle) home for single adult. Has small kitchenette, bath, and living/dining room. No smoking, not pets. \$450/month. Call Linda (evenings) at 206-522-2475.

LONG TERM CARE: The NEA Long term care insurance group plan, underwritten by Mutual of Omaha Insurance offers you the flexibility to fashion a program designed to fit your specific need. There are several options available. The plan allows you to receive the long term care services you need. The group plan also offers a 10% discount for your NEA membership and a 30% discount for married couples. For more information please call: Charlene Walden. NEA Member Benefit at (360) 863-1867 or cwalden36@yahoo.com.

Retirement Reception

Mark your calendars and plan to join us in honoring this year's retirees!

Thursday, May 31st

3:30 PM

**Admin Center
Board Room**

Northshore News is a publication of the Northshore Education Association. NSEA is the union and professional organization of the certificated staff of the Northshore School District.

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CEA Reminder

NSEA members can carry over up to \$1,500 in their CEA accounts each year. Any balance in excess of \$1,500 at the year's end will be added to the CEA pool of funds for distribution the subsequent year. To find out your balance, contact Zenith at 800-426-5980.