

NORTHSHORE NEWS

May, 2007

NORTHSHORE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Issue 9



NSEA Calendar

May 2007

- ◆ **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 22nd**: Last day for students!
- ◆ **June 25th**: Non-student Day
- ◆ **June 26th**: Grading Day
- ◆ **June 26th**: NSD School Board Meeting, 7:00 pm Admin Center
- ◆ **June 30th**: NEA-RA begins, Philadelphia, PA

July 2007

- ◆ **July 1st-5th**: NEA-RA, Philadelphia, PA
- ◆ **July 4th**: Independence Day!

Congratulations!

Several NSEA members have received accolades recently. NSEA would like to congratulate:

- **Shelia Guard** from Canyon Park JH for being selected as one of 30 outstanding science teachers in the nation by California-based bio-tech company Amgen.
- **Jan Morgan** from Bothell HS for being chosen by the World Affairs Council as one of four teachers to go on an educational trip to Turkey.
- **John Schmied** from Skyview JH who was awarded a King County Earth Hero at School award for establishing an environmental center adjacent to Skyview.
- **Laurie Walloch** from Shelton View Elementary. One of Laurie's former students wrote a winning essay about her in WEA's student essay contest, *A Teacher to Remember*.

Congratulations on your achievements!

President's Message

The end of the year is quickly approaching if we don't have anymore school cancellations. The snow is over, windstorms seem unlikely, they don't cancel school for a sunny day even though they should once in a while, so that leaves volcanoes, earthquakes, and pestilence. I think we're safe! If not you can blame me for bringing on the most recent catastrophe because of my poor sense of humor.

The **legislative session** has concluded and we are still waiting for the significant down payment for education. **Gainsharing** will end after the next disbursement in 2008. However, our **retirement age** with no penalties was reduced from 65 to 62 years of age (with 30 years of service). We can count that as a plus. The **simple majority** for passage of school levies will finally go to the voters for approval. Our **COLA** was funded for the next two years and **I-728 funding** has finally reached the level it was supposed to reach three years ago. **National Board** stipends were increased to \$5,000 per year and moved to a stable funding base. Our **health insurance** costs remain a mystery, but it is safe to assume that we will be paying more for our insurance due to the meager increase in state funding for our insurance costs. All in all this is a very mixed bag for the teachers of Washington.

Where do we go from here? At my next WEA Board of Directors meeting in June that is sure to be the main topic of discussion. With newly elected leadership in WEA, the direction of our state organization may change. I will report back on this topic in my final report for the 2006-2007 school year next month.

District initiated transfers are in the process of being decided right now. This is a difficult time for several of our colleagues as they move into a time of change. Of course some people are not phased by change while others find the whole process very uncomfortable. It would be great if all the transfers could be completed by the end of June, but reality tells us a few might still occur over the summer.

District budget cuts have also been announced and they bring home very well the problems being created by the lack of adequate state funding. Shortfalls in both Special Education and transportation funding continue to plague the Northshore School District. With 87% of our operating costs consumed by personnel, the ability to make cuts that don't involve personnel are disappearing quickly. Cuts are already being projected for the next year as well. WEA has tabulated what the new money from the state means for the NSD, and our bargainers will be discussing these monies with the district during our contract negotiations with limited re-openers in May and June.

NSEA has a team in this year's **American Cancer Society's Relay For Life**. The event will be held May 19-20. I am the team captain and will be joined by 14 other NSEA members. We have already exceeded our team fund raising goal but will welcome additional donations. Feel free to come by Skyview Junior High and cheer us on or to make a donation!

Letter to Seattle Times Editor

NSEA President Tim Brittell wrote a letter on behalf of the association in response to an editorial that ran in the *Seattle Times* that supported the end of gainsharing. Though the *Times* editorial originally appeared on April 16th, Tim's response was not printed until May 8th. Below is Tim's letter:

The elimination of gainsharing for state employees (HB 1771) is comparable to a bait-and-switch tactic. In 1998, gainsharing was the bait used to entice state employees from Plan 2 to Plan 3 of the state retirement system. Virtually all Washington school teachers under Plan 2 made the switch to Plan 3 because of this promise.

Now the Legislature wants to go back on the promise of gainsharing.

The Times stated, "because public pensions are already generous," gainsharing should be eliminated ["Don't blow \$1 billion hole in future budgets" editorial, April 16].

State employees rank at the bottom of public pension plans when compared with Global Challenge States. Using the barometer of the Global Challenge States as our comparative foundation, Washington's state retirement system is abysmal. The state benefit multiplier at a mere 1 percent and the employer contribution rate of 2.92 percent put Washington at the bottom of these comparative states.

A Washington teacher with 30 years' experience and a \$60,000 salary would receive \$18,000 a year in retirement benefits. Health-care costs of \$600 per month will take 40 percent of this pension. This is far from generous.

Gainsharing was a promise made to state employees and it should be a promise kept!

—Timothy Brittell, President, Northshore Education Association, Kenmore



NBPTS Bonus Now Permanent

In the past, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards bonus was not in statute—therefore, it was subject to approval during each legislative session. As a result of this session, however, the bonus is now part of state law.

Further, the \$3,500 annual bonus was increased to \$5,000 per year, and an automatic annual COLA was attached to it. Therefore, in future years, the bonus will go up with inflation. For now, this \$5,000 bonus does not count towards future pension benefits. The WEA will introduce legislation in the next session to try to get it included.

Here in Northshore, about 23 teachers are Board certified already. If you are interested in pursuing National Board Certification now that the bonuses are guaranteed for the 10-year life of the certificate, you can find information on how to do so at www.nbpts.org.

Proactive, Respectful Solution for 07-08 Calendar

“Proactive” is one word to describe the agreement on the 07-08 Calendar. And “respect” is also a word to describe it.

There is no change in the number of work days: 185. Of these, 175 are student days, and 10 are non-student days.



The “proactive” part is that NSEA and the administration have agreed—in advance—on make up days for up to 3 possible emergency closure (snow) days. The “respect” part—and the good news—is that these 3 make up days will not require staff to report to school on additional days, provided grades are turned in on time. Staff will also verify having worked 7 professional hours by completing a simple form.

An emergency closure prior to Winter Break will mean that January 2 (currently a non-designated non-student work day) will be a school day. Friday, June 20 (not currently a work day) will become a grading day.

A second emergency closure will result in April 4 (currently a non-designated non-student work day) becoming a school day. Monday, June 23 (not currently a work day) will become a grading day.

A third emergency closure will result in May 27 (currently an Intra-District/Site Day) becoming a school day. Certificated staff will fill out a form to verify that they have worked an additional 7 professional hours (or pro-rated for part time staff).

NSEA thanks the Superintendent and District administrative leaders for recognizing that NSEA members work many more hours than are on any calendar. We appreciate the respect.

Classifieds

FOR RENT: House in North Seattle, Haller Lake neighborhood. Convenient access to I-5 and 99. 2 BR/ 1 bath; 950 sq. ft. Large backyard; directly across from elementary school with huge playground. NS/NP. \$1,400/ month. Available June 1st. Call Katie at 206-953-2406.

VACATION RENTAL: Reserve time at my Hood Canal, Tahuya vacation home. All the comforts of home plus a beautiful view, large deck, swimming off dock, boat launch, sailing/rowing dingy, bird watching, beach walks or crabbing, star gazing, and GREAT sunsets! The place sleeps 5-6, rents for \$560/week; or \$100/night. Contact Nancy Bacon at 425-483-8068 or tuckerandfun@comcast.net

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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Personal Leave

Did you know each of us accrues two days of personal paid leave per year (pro-rated for part-timers), in addition to our 12 days of sick leave? Personal leave can be used for “personal reasons. The employee shall not be required to state reasons for the leave other than it is personal.” (Article 46.1 of NSEA’s CBA)

Personal leave needs to be scheduled at least one week in advance, except in unanticipated circumstances.

Personal days are cumulative up to four days. Any unused personal leave over four days is lost unless you cash it out. For a full explanation of the annual cash out, please see Addendum F (pp. 169-170) of our contract.

Personal leave is a negotiated benefit for full and part time employees. It’s yours to use. Please refer to our CBA online at www.northshoreea.org for more information.