

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

April 2010

Bargaining Update

The HEA bargaining team met for the first time with the District April 30. The team discussed the 2010-11 school calendar. An agreement was reached. Please go to the HSD website to view the new calendar. The afternoon portion of the session was spent outlining how we proceed regarding the schools that received the school improvement grants. An evaluation subcommittee was created. The SIG and the education reform bill 6696 require the development of a new evaluation system. The team meets with the District again on April 16.

Budget Update

The state Senate released another revenue package Monday April 5, but unless both the Senate and House reach agreement soon, K-12 schools and higher education are still facing millions in budget cuts.

The latest Senate plan includes a one-tenth of a percent increase in the general sales tax, increases the tax on beer and extends the sales tax to candy and gum. The House is expected to respond on April 7.

The current special legislative session ends April 14. The Legislature has to reach agreement on a revenue plan before it can pass a supplemental state budget. Without new revenue, public education is facing more than \$400 million in additional budget cuts. WEA is working with the state PTA and other education groups to protect funding for these four priorities:

- K-4 class-size reduction. Small class sizes are crucial to a quality education. This program funds more than 1,500 teachers. The typical K-4 class size will increase by as many as five students if this funding is eliminated.
- Maintain the enhanced classified employee staffing ratio. Elementary school students struggling to attain grade level in reading and math will lose hundreds of instructional assistants if this funding is reduced. Other critical school support services would also be lost.
- All-day kindergarten. In this time of higher academic standards and expectations, students benefit tremendously from all-day kindergarten. All-day K is especially beneficial for low-income students.
- Levy equalization. Levy equalization funding (local effort assistance) benefits 220 school districts throughout the state and helps fund teachers, classified employees and student programs to help provide a high-quality education for all of Washington's children.

Educator Night Forum

The next forum will be held April 29 at the Embassy Suites located at 15920 W Valley Hwy. The topic is Generational Issues. This will help you understand the differences between generations and will allow you to work better with your colleagues. Kevin Ramsey from WEA will be the trainer. Contact Donna at the HEA office to register.

Special Education Task Force

The Special Ed Task Force met twice in March and on April 2. The committee will meet again the end of April. The Committee has faced resistance from the District and the sessions have become increasingly more difficult. The team was happy to reach agreement on 2 topics at the last session.

Facebook!!!

HEA now has a fan page on Facebook. Please encourage you members who have a Facebook page to become a fan of the HEA page. Once they become a fan they can see updates on HEA business that affects them. We hope to send 3-5 messages a week on Facebook.