

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

January 2010

State Board of Ed Update

SBE met Monday, January 4th. This was an emergency meeting at which they passed a “final” version of a bill draft to come to the legislature this session. If you visit the SBE website www.sbe.wa.gov in order to see the actions taken at that meeting and amendments that were made. Any positive changes you see there can be attributed to the work WEA members. This occurred at local meetings held with SBE members. The WEA staff also worked directly with individual SBE members. Bernal Baca and Eric Liu were our strongest supporters in the amendment process of this bill. WEA was successful in convincing the Board that if there is impasse in bargaining over the “required action plan” there should be a PERC mediation process in place.

The proposed required action legislation would:

- Have the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction identify the bottom five percent of persistently low achieving schools – a criteria for federal school improvement funding (the schools receiving Title I funds and in a step of improvement or secondary schools that are eligible for Title I funds).
- Have the State Board of Education designate required action school districts –those with at least one persistently low-achieving school not receiving school improvement funds.
- Begin the SBE required action process in 2011 (annually thereafter). In 2010, districts may volunteer to participate.
- Require an external academic performance audit of each required action district.
- Require districts to develop required action plans in a collaborative process with administrators, teachers and staff, parents, unions, students, and community representatives. OSPI will provide technical assistance.
 - The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction must review the plan and confirm that it is consistent with federal guidelines for school improvement grants. The State Board of Education must also approve the plan.
 - The district required action plan must utilize one of the four federal intervention models.
 - The district required action plan must be designed to allow the district to improve within three years.
 - Collective bargaining agreements in every required action district must contain an agreement requiring an addendum to be negotiated if necessary to develop and implement a required action plan. The addendum must provide for mediation by the Public Employees Relation Commission and for binding arbitration if mediation is unsuccessful.
 - The State Board of Education must approve the required action plan. Implementation of the plan is subject to the availability of federal funds.
 - SBE may direct OSPI to reallocate Title I funds in a required action district if a local district required action plan is not submitted or if it is not approved by the SBE.
- The OSPI shall report twice a year to the SBE on the required action districts' progress.

The next State Board of Education meeting will be at the Tumwater New Market Skills Center in Tumwater, Washington, on January 13-14, 2010.

State Budget Update

The overall K-12 budget is reduced by \$408 million. The major reductions are:

Levy equalization is eliminated in the 2011 calendar year	\$ (142.9 million)
K-4 Staff Enhancement is eliminated in the 2010-11 school year	(110.6 million)
Initiative 728 Student Achievement funds are eliminated in the 2010-11 school year	(78.5 million)
All Day Kindergarten is eliminated for the 2010-11 school year	(33.6 million)
Learning Improvement Day is eliminated for the 2010-11 school year	(15 million)
Gifted Education funding is eliminated for the 2010-11 school year	(7.4 million)
Various small grant programs to schools from OSPI are eliminated (see attached list)	(13.8 million)
Alternative Routes to Certification is Reduced (about 50%)	(2 million)
Focused Assistance to Schools is Reduced (about 50%)	(1.5 million)

It is important to note that the top four listed items will all result in significant staff reductions in schools throughout the state. We estimate that just the K-4 class size enhancement and the I-728 funding provide for about 3,000 classroom teachers statewide, and those positions will no longer be funded by the state. In addition, many ESP members and additional CIS are funded through the state's levy equalization payments, although it's difficult to fully quantify the staff losses that will result from that cut. It is easy to say that on average that class sizes in Washington will increase by about 2 to 3 students as a result of these cuts.

Compensation:

The loss of the remaining Learning Improvement Day (LID) will result in another 0.55% reduction in base pay for teachers. There are no other compensation-related changes contemplated in the supplemental spending plan. The funding for employee pensions remains the same as originally budgeted. Similarly, the planned increase in funding for employee health benefits continues to be scheduled to increase from the current year amount of \$745 per month to \$768 per month for the 2010-11 school year. The amounts due the Health Care Authority for the retiree remittance (\$59.59 this year and \$64.90 in the 2010-11 school year) also remain the same. Funding for bonus payments to those certified by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards will continue as originally budgeted under the Governor's proposal.

As a final note on K-12 funding, the Governor did suggest this morning that her proposal for new revenue would be used to buy back many of the cuts contained in this budget. One of the items she specifically noted for future funding would be the Levy Equalization program. This effort would be in concert with another proposal she mentioned today (details still forthcoming) to increase the levy lid on local school districts to 36% for all districts, along with a commensurate increase in levy equalization payments to the poorest quartile of school districts to 18%.

Educator Night Forum

The next forum is scheduled for January 28th from 5-8 pm. It will be held at the Red Lion Hotel in Seatac (18220 International Blvd). We will start with dinner at 5 pm with the training to start shortly thereafter. The topic will be “Positive Behavior Supports”. Please have interested members from your building contact the HEA office to register. These fill fast so encourage them to do it quickly.

PoliSparks

This great training regarding the role politics plays in education will take place in Olympia February 26 and 27. Please recruit members and call the HEA office with people interested in attending.

Contract Issues

An update will be provided on the ULP regarding PE classes at the High School level.

The Special Ed Task Force will meet this Tuesday and Friday. We are finishing up the stage of storytelling all the issues of the various groups. The committee had guest presenters from the early childhood area last month.

2261

Handouts will be provided.