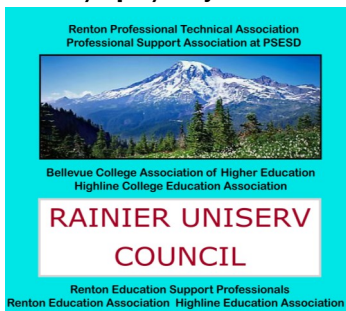


March/April/May 2015



Rainier UniServ Council Newsletter

Upcoming Dates

March 14th
Legislative Town Hall
Somerset Elementary, Bellevue
10:00 AM

March 26
Ed Forum Night 7:00 PM
Special Education Issues
Billy Baroo's

April 15
McCleary vs. The State of
Washington
Highline PAC 6:30 PM

April 16
Mock RA

April 18
Re-Ignite Conference

April 23-25
WEA Representative Assembly

April 25
Rally on the Capital Steps in
Olympia 9:30 AM

May 14
Ed Forum
Cultural Competency/Diversity
May 16

May 26
WEA Retired to meet with Randy
Dorn

End Toxic Testing: Give Teachers Time to Teach and Students Time to Learn

Article by Karen Adlum

Were you able to get to Olympia for the Opt Out Rally on February 16? If not, you missed an amazing experience. The BAT chorus sang several songs with updated words by Becca Ritchie making the point about testing & the reasons to Opt Out. Julianna Dauble was our charming emcee, welcoming some terrific speakers. We heard from parents about their decision to Opt their children Out and Elizabeth Hanson spoke about the money ties to corporate reform and Pearson's fingers in all the testing pies, talking about the increased number

of people unable to pass the GED since being rewritten by Pearson. Elizabeth Scott spoke powerfully about the reason behind a lot of the reform and testing...DATA MINING! An emotional moment was when a VERY LONG scroll was unwound with names on it representing the 7,000 students who did not graduate in 2012 due to failing one or more standardized test in Washington State. Graduation gowns and people laying on the ground represented the loss of those students dreams. Susan DuFrense choreographed this event.

We heard from some impassioned Tye High School students who are right now fighting to graduate while being unable to pass those tests. Can you imagine doing all you are supposed to do to graduate and one test holds you back? There are many reasons to Refuse the Tests but this is surely one of the best! View a slide show of the rally at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94lCdQ_3pbU



It Is Time To Fund Education

March 14th is the day to send a strong message from educators throughout our council to our legislators (Sen. Litzow, Rep. Senn, Rep. Clibborn) that it is time to fund education. Educators will be gathering at **Somerset Elementary School**, 14100 Somerset Blvd. SE, Bellevue, WA at **10:00 am** to talk to the legislators from the 41st legislative District. Bring your family to this event and share your story about how the lack of funding has impacted your classroom. It is time for our state to fully fund our public schools. RSVP at OurVoiceWashingtonEA.org. This will be followed by a meeting with the legislators from the 11th legislative district at the King County Office of Emergency Management (3511 NE 2nd Street Renton, WA) at 1:00 PM.

Black Lives Matter to Teachers

On February 6th, educators from Rainier UniServ Council joined colleagues in Seattle to share the message that Black Lives Matter to Teachers. In conjunction with the Backbone Campaign, these educators used lighted letters to share their message at Westlake Park.



RECN



The Rainier Educators of Color Network are hard at work this year sharing the information that was gathered last year at various listening sessions with district and union officials. Our meeting in January started the conversations around what systemic changes could be put in motion to begin to address the concerns that students, educators, parent and community members shared.

RECN completed two listening sessions with students and one with the educators at Renton's Secondary Learning Center. Our next listening sessions will be held at Highline's Chinook Middle School.

Mark your calendar: RECN will be hosting Dr. Denisha Jones on **May 2** from 10-2 for a cultural competency professional development workshop.

The work RECN is doing has been funded through a grant from the National Education Association.

If you have an interest in working on one of the RECN committees or on the Core organizing group please contact Alan Sutliff at asutliff@washingtonea.org. All are welcome to participate in this work!

Did you know...

Classified Public Employees Association members were voted in as members of the Washington Education Association at the 1982 WEA Representative assembly. Shortly after, CPEA was renamed Educational Support Personnel (ESP) to align with what NEA used. In 2001, NEA recognized these personnel as professionals making ESP the abbreviation for Educational Support Professionals.

WEA Legislative Goals

WEA has four legislative goals for this year:

- Competitive Professional Compensation
- Reliable, Predictable and Sustainable School Funding
- Focus on Students
- Protecting and strengthening the Education profession.

Legislators have been proposing legislation since the opening day of session on January 12th. The deadline for legislation to be

heard and voted on to pass out of committee was February 20th. Bills that did not make it out of committee can return next year or can return attached to other legislation.

Our WEA lobbyists are busy following all of the bills that would effect our members. You can get a run down of legislation that WEA is supporting or legislation that WEA is actively lobbying against from the <http://Ourvoicewashingtonea.org> website.

Did you know....

The term "UniServ" was concocted from "Unified Service."

This program was adopted at the NEA Representative convention hosted in San Francisco in July, 1970.

In The Trenches

brought to you by Rainier Activists (R.Activists)

R.Activists has been providing forums for Rainier members to learn more about the connections between our working conditions, our students' learning conditions, and decision-makers for four years. Due to the crushing workload our members' experience, this year we decided to bring our support and knowledge directly to school buildings in Renton and Highline. The gatherings are open to any Rainier member, and we ask people to:

- Share work-related issues of any type (classroom, building, district) with colleagues
- Tell YOUR stories of the impacts of the issues
- Plan how to share your stories with decision-makers (building,

district, state)

We have held two lively meetings, one in Renton and one in Highline, discussing building-specific and district level issues. Members planned thoughtful, creative strategies, and they have taken action to resolve issues. The R.Activists team (Amy Hepburn, Becca Ritchie, Julianna Dauble, and Elizabeth Beck) also bring up-to-the-minute political information about how members' education issues are faring in our legislature.

Please attend the next "In The Trenches" event in April at a Renton school near you! More details to follow...ask your building representatives and read emails from Cami Kiel and Sue McCabe. Questions? Contact Amy Hepburn at: amyhepburn1951@gmail.com

Re-Ignite

Re-Ignite is designed to reenergize and invigorate our members who are in year 10 or higher of their career. Through team building and shared experience, participants connect with other professionals to network and share tips, suggestions, support and general camaraderie in their teaching careers for years to come. Reflection, relaxation and motivation in an atmosphere of admiration and appreci-

ation for the work that you do everyday will recharge your enthusiasm for the vocation to which you have dedicated your life. The date for Re-Ignite this year is April 18. More details will be coming soon. Check with your building reps.

Space is limited so RSVP with Lori Fleck at lfleck@washingtonea.org Join us to Re-Ignite your love of our profession!

Did you know...

The Washington State House of Representatives is made of up 98 seats. The Senate is made up of 49.

Follow education legislation at <http://ourvoicewashingtonea.org>.

Don't know who your legislators are? Go to

[Http://leg.wa.gov](http://leg.wa.gov) to find out!

McCleary Vs. State of Washington: The paramount duty of the state to provide ample support for basic education

The Rainier UniServ Council with various other associations are sponsoring an evening with Tom Ahearne, the plaintiff's attorney in the McCleary decision. Tom's depth of knowledge regarding this landmark ruling is unsurpassed. He will share what the state has done to work toward the ruling as well as address the most recent finding that says our state is in contempt.

Tom will be joined by Andy

Nicholas. Andy is a Senior analyst from the Washington State Budget and Policy Center. Andy will discuss ways Washington can create a sustainable budget for all services needed.

Please join us at 6:30, April 15 at the Highline Performing Arts Center for this informative presentation about what McCleary is and how the ruling's directives can be realized.

Did you know...

The Professional Negotiations Act of 1965 recognized the right of employee organization to represent certificated employees in their relations with school districts? Prior to that, teachers did not have collective bargaining rights.



Educators in year 1-6 of their career gather to participate in Sparks.

Have you joined WEA-PAC?

For \$2.25 per month, you will help support educator voice in Olympia during. Check with your local president to get an application.

Poli-Sparks

Teachers from around the state gathered in Olympia for the annual PoliSPARKS training led by Rainier Staff Elizabeth Beck, Tacoma Staff Jessica Upton and Rainier WEA PAC Chair Julianna Dauble. Attendees shared their current concerns with education and spoke of the hope they see in political spheres before learning a bit about the history of the labor movement. There were breakout sessions with WEA's lead lobbyist, Lucinda Young, election/campaign highlights and communication updates from other WEA staff. Members then practiced lobbying each other on key issues such as testing, evaluation, and class size. That evening, dinner was a meeting with Speaker of the House Frank Chopp, Representatives Steve Bergquist and Carol Gregory and Senators Marko Liias and Bob Hasegawa. Members came away from that conversation inspired by lawmakers

who truly endeavor to authentically support our schools. Monday everyone competed in 'The Amazing Race' and explored the capitol buildings with fun tasks before meeting Superintendent Randy Dorn at OSPI for lunch. The meeting was insightful and at times rather tense as teachers shared frustrations with our elected school chief. Finally, PoliSPARKERS headed back to the capitol offices for personal appointments with legislators. The lobby skills they practiced were put to immediate use and WEA now has another set of highly motivated and skilled members ready to take on the challenges Olympia will continue to present.

Re-Authorization of ESEA

The 114th United States Congress has taken up the work that is 13 years overdue.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was passed and signed into law in 1965 by President Johnson. It was renamed in 2001 when President H. W. Bush signed No Child Left Behind into law. In 2007 a commission was formed to study the effects of NCLB. The controversies that surround this work has limited the progress.

In 2015, former Secretary of Education and current Senator from Tennessee, Lamar Alexander, Jr. is chairing the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions committee in the US Senate. He has vowed to move the reauthorization of ESEA.

NEA has been involved in the re-write of this law and has given valuable perspective to those working on it. Join their voices to tell our senators that the over testing is not working. Teachers need time to teach and students need time to learn. Grade-band assessment (eg. grades 4th, 7th and 10th) will inform schools of progress but will still allow for this much needed time. Educators need a dashboard of indicators that shows student growth.

Go to <http://educationvotes.nea.org> and take action today to make your voice heard!

RUC

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Becca Ritchie

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Deb Strayer

MaryJo McLaughlin

UniServ Directors

Elizabeth Beck

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UniServ Field Assistant

Lori Fleck

Newsletter Editor

Becca Ritchie

Did you know...

Information was found in
"Class Wars: The Story of
the Washington Education
Association 1965-2001" by
Steve Kink and John Cahill

Legislative Updates:

[Http://ourvoicewashingtonea.org](http://ourvoicewashingtonea.org)



Visit the WEA Professional Development
Network to see all of the offerings.

<http://www.washingtonea.org/pd>

WEA Representative Assembly in April

April 23-25 your elected representatives will gather in Bellevue to hold this year's Representative Assembly, often called RA.

They will debate suggested resolutions (our guiding beliefs) and New Business Items, also known as NBIs (one year actionable items for WEA). Decisions made at RA guide the direction of the organization.

Awards are given out at the RA, as well as dignitaries from around the state come to speak to the body.

Saturday will begin with an early bus ride to Olympia for a rally on the steps. You do not have to be a representative to join the rally. It will start at 9:30 AM.

Message from your RUC President



Greetings from the RUC President! As a full time teacher at Highline High School, I feel the pressure of this school year right along with the rest of you. It seems

that every time we turn around there is one more addition to our overcrowded platter, from district mandates to the administration of punitive high stakes tests. The time is certainly now to engage and be active!

This is an historic time for Rainier and the Washington Education Association.

This year is the confluence of three key event: the McCleary decision, that holds that the State is not upholding its Constitutional duty to fully fund education; Initiative 1351, our hard fought class size reduction campaign; and a budget writing year. The State Supreme Court has given the legislature one more chance to do right by our students or

impose sanctions stemming from the contempt order. And because of this it is critical that we all show up, stand up, and speak up. I encourage you all to please go to the OurVoiceWashingtonea.org website and write to your members of the legislature.

This weekend, I am surrounded by the energy of early career teachers at Rainier's SPARKS Conference and I tell you, it's contagious. I am proud that Rainier offers this great training for our early career educators annually. SPARKS is just one of the many events that Rainier sponsors, including our Educator Forums, PoliSparks, and Re-Ignite.

Thank you for all of the hard work you do on behalf of the students in our Council. It is my honor to represent your voice on the WEA board, at school board meetings, and in Olympia.

In Solidarity,

Jeb Binns

Council President

WEA Board Directors

The WEA board meets every other month at the WEA offices in Federal Way. We listen to reports on budget, politics related to education, vote on issues brought to the board for action.

We learn about what is happening in the state and the nation on education issues. We take action and represent our local councils. We also serve on a variety of committees doing work for the organization.

This year the RA will also be electing our NEA board directors for Washington state. There is one position open. These directors join directors from other states to help guide NEA policy and participate in lobbying in Washington DC.

The Washington Education Association's president, Kim Mead, presides over this annual meeting.

If you would like to observe, you can get a visitor's pass and see the action on the floor.

If you are interested in volunteering at the event contact your local president for more information.

