

575 Andover Park West, Tukwila, WA 98188
<http://wea-rainier.org> 206-246-9308



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Janie White Selected as WEA's ESP of the Year	1
WEA joins Twelve other groups for Rally	1
Culturally Responsive Classrooms....	2
Bellevue College Appoints New College....	2
Restorative Justice Core Team Starts	3
Examining Race and Discrimination....	3
Rainier Attends NCUEA Fall Conference	4
Student Bill of Rights	5
President's Message	6
Upcoming Dates	6

Janie White Selected as WEA's ESP of the Year

By Jeb Binns

Congratulations to Rainier's very own Janie White for winning the WEA Education Support Professional of the Year! Janie's work as local president with RESP, her commitment to her staff and students at Nelsen Middle School, her work with the Rainier Educators of Color Network, and her all around awesomeness tipped the scales in her favor. It's a great honor to be recognized by your peers and a statewide panel. Representative Assembly delegates are looking forward to hearing Janie's remarks in Spokane at the annual meeting. In addition to the statewide award, Janie will be recognized at a nationwide NEA conference and is now in the running for National ESP of the year. Now wouldn't that be exciting! Good luck, Janie!



WEA Joins Twelve Other Groups to Rally for Student Civil Rights and Amply Funded Public Schools

On January 16th, over 6,500 school educators, parents, students and supporters of public education converged in Olympia to convey a simple message: Washington's 1.1 million public school students have a constitutional right to an amply funded public education, regardless of their ZIP Code or family background. Quality public education is a civil right in our state. As parents, educators, and community members, we demand that the 2017 Washington Legislature comply with the Supreme Court's McCleary decision and amply fund the basic education the Constitution guarantees. Rainier UniServ Council sent two busloads of members to join the rally.



WEA Representative Assembly 2017

New Business Items

- A. Standing Strong and United for Students
- B. Safe Zone School Board Resolution
- C. Know Your Rights—Federal Changes to Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals
- D. Diversity Sparks
- E. Local Every Student Succeeds Act Engagement
- F. Updated WEA Mission, Goals, Objectives and Core Values
- G. Small/Rural Release Time Grant
- H. Small/Rural Professional Development Grant
- I. Small/Rural Local Leader Mentorship
- J. Small/Rural Member Engagement
1. Pledge Allegiance to Veterans and their Families
5. Mentors of Color** (Janie White and Becca Ritchie)
6. Trauma Informed Guide** (Susan DuFresne and Becca Ritchie)
7. Support for the 10th Annual NW Teaching for Social Justice Conference
8. Public Banking Makes Too Much Sense Too Ignore** (Julianna Dauble)
11. Shoring Up Teacher Pension System
12. Fall NBI Progress Report
13. It's Time to be Heard—A May Day of Action
14. WEA Discrimination Policy
16. We believe in Unstructured Playtime...Now What?
17. Substitute Membership Still Matters
20. Moral Misalignment Marginalizing Members** (Jeb Binns)
21. Funding for action supporting the McCleary Decision
23. Social Media Protection
25. Career and Technical Education Funding
26. Contract Language for School Psychologists
27. Support March for Science April 22nd, 2017
28. Climate Justice Education
29. Ethical Investment
30. Support Immigrant Students and Families ** (Juan Cordóva)
31. Call to Action—October 2017
34. Developmentally Inappropriate k-3 standards
36. Replace WA-AIM with a useful and valid measure
37. Protecting Local Collective Bargaining
38. Support Student Washington Education Association
39. Student Leadership Conference for SWEA Members
41. End Privatization to Break the School to Prison Pipeline** (Sandy Hunt)
43. How can Restorative Justice Work in Schools? ** (Lucero Alegre)
45. Educators of Color State Conference
47. Speaking out against Age Discrimination

Resolutions

Highly Capable Education—New Resolution 1
 School Emergency Procedures Best Practices—New Resolution 3** (Tom Walker)
 Ethnic Studies—New Resolution 4
 Amendments to Continuing Resolutions
 D-1 Updating Emergency First Aid for 2017** (Tom Walker)
 I-3 Schools Should Be SAFE for ALL
 B-29 Special Education Guidelines** (Jeb Binns)
 F-7 Higher Education Programs** (Sue Nightingale and Becca Ritchie)
 C-14 Revenue Belongs to the People ** (Julianna Dauble)
 I-5 Extremist Groups

Skipped numbers represent business that either did not pass or was moved to committee.

** denotes business moved by a Rainier UniServ Member. If you would like more information around any of the business, please reach out to one of the Representative Assembly delegates, your local governance or the Rainier UniServ Council governance.

Election Results

President Kim Mead with 88% of the vote

Vice President Stephen Miller with 85% of the vote

NEA Board Director Miguel Saldaña 95% of the vote

The National Education Association Representative Assembly will be held in Boston, MA June 30-July 5.

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CLASSROOMS AND COMMUNITIES ARE A NECESSITY

by Aneeka Ferrell, MBA/PA, BA

We are WEA...aren't we? We can make a difference, can't we? How do we impact change and obtain the best culturally responsive strategies to increase resiliency across different cultures and races within our classrooms and communities?

If you weren't sure how to answer these questions, attending the WEA's Human and Civil Rights Leadership Conference was the place to get the answers. The Human and Civil Rights Leadership Conference provided various workshops to develop approaches to implement and understand how educators and stakeholders can benefit diverse students and work in a culturally responsive manner. Educators attended workshops and sessions providing them with techniques to help improve and build equity in the classroom and community.

Discovering definitions of true cross-cultural competency built the foundation of the two-day conference. Cross-cultural competency was defined as "the will and skill to create authentic and effective relationships across difference" (WEA HCR Leadership Conference, 2016). The framework supporting this structure includes awareness, knowledge, skills, and advocacy. First, we must be *aware* of our individual assumptions about human behavior, values, biases, preconceived notions, and personal limitations. Secondly, we must build *knowledge* of the worldview of culturally diverse students, families, their communities. We must develop the *skills* to develop and implement appropriate, relevant, and sensitive strategies to become more effective across differences. This all informs our *advocacy*: supporting and promoting the needs of students, families, and colleagues. Being cognizant of cultural competency builds resiliency among various cultures. The success of these strategies aids in building social relationships, communicating in a culturally responsive way, cultivating safe and inclusive environments, while implementing culturally responsive behavior interventions to all students.

Forming alliances and coalitions to build awareness and understanding of cultural competency and responsiveness is key to creating equity in classrooms and school communities. WEA's Human and Civil Rights Leadership Conference worked to establish these alliances and coalitions in order for resources to be shared and implemented. It is our job to use what we learned to create authentic and effective relationships across difference in classrooms and beyond.



Bellevue College Appoints a New College President

by Sue Nightingale, Bellevue College

Bellevue College has appointed a new college president, Jerry Weber. There is more information at the following link: <http://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/education/bellevue-college-picks-its-new-president/>

This appointment precedes bargaining that has begun for the 2017-2020 contract.



Restorative Justice Core Team Begins Meeting in Renton

By Cort Leininger, Lindbergh High School

A group of Renton educators have been meeting regularly since December, with the goal of bringing restorative justice practices to Renton classrooms.

Renton's current discipline system assumes that punishment is necessary to hold students responsible for their actions and deter future misbehavior. However, this punishment frequently involves removing a student from class, and research consistently shows that removal not only disrupts learning, but also fails to stop misbehavior. Furthermore, African American, Hispanic, and American Indian students are disproportionately targeted by this broken system. Finally, studies have shown that frequently removing students from class also negatively affects the academics and morale of students who are never removed.

As educators, we are morally obligated to shift our policy, but how? The concept of restorative justice suggests we can best address conflicts in our schools (and society) by focusing not on our urge to punish wrongdoing, but instead on repairing harm. For example, instead of suspending students for fighting, then hoping they never fight again, a restorative justice school might look at the harm caused by the fight, then involve all parties to brainstorm a solution that repairs the relationship between the students, makes up for the disruption, and addresses the needs

of staff. This same practice can address anything from minor disruptions to bullying and harassment.

Although it is necessary to alter our discipline system, it is also necessary that we do so thoughtfully, with input from students, parents, staff and the community. Funded by an NEA grant awarded to the Rainier UniServ Council, Renton's Restorative Justice Core Team met regularly to discuss the best way forward. We read about school districts who have put these policies in place, looked at restorative approaches in the legal system, and researched best practices to ensure we do not enact a system in which disruptive behavior simply goes unaddressed. Misbehavior must be addressed, and it is best addressed through a restorative lens rather than a punitive one.

We are in the final stages of planning a free community event for **Thursday, May 18th 6:00-8:00PM**, at the Renton IKEA Performing Arts Center. In addition to sharing an overview of restorative justice and how it can work in conjunction with existing school programs such as PBIS and Positive Discipline, we will be hosting a panel of experts excited to share their experiences in restorative justice. We will also share plans for upcoming book studies. Please join us to increase fairness and academic achievement for all students.

Examining Race and Discrimination

By Stephanie Nelsen, Highline

Recently, I was able to attend a Densho teacher workshop. The title of the workshop was Examining Race and Discrimination: Learning from Oral History to Become Agents of Change Today. The essential question throughout the workshop was "How can oral histories inform our thinking about racism and discrimination today?" Densho is well known for their collection of oral histories connected to World War II and the incarceration of Japanese. This workshop connected to current issues and how one could build knowledge on bringing change in today's society. We saw interviews with those that had experienced racism recently and in the past: a Japanese American going to the local pool in the 1930's, African American women dealing with racist thinking, a Muslim American who was attacked while waiting to catch the bus. As table teams we

analyzed, discussed and dove deeply into building our knowledge of systemic racism. Having a background on the history of racism in America as well as a glossary of terms to better understand each other was an essential part of the workshop. Walking away with resources to support my students, my school, and share with others was a valuable part of the workshop. This workshop is happening four times: Seattle, Spokane, Alabama and New York. Being able to build a tool kit of how individuals and groups can help in discriminatory incidents is important in our society today. I walked away with a better knowledge of how to implement discussions in my classroom. Oral history is powerful and being able to discuss with other teachers in a meaningful way was essential to helping me dive into a sensitive and complex subject.

Rainier Attends NCUEA Fall Conference

By Carmen Unti

Maybe you're like me and you've heard of NCUEA but never really knew what it was. NCUEA is the National Council of Urban Education Associations and is a group within NEA that advocates for urban concerns. Local associations and UniServs with at least 1,000 members are eligible to join. Each fall NCUEA holds a conference with general sessions, regional meetings, and a variety of breakout sessions.

The 2016 Fall Conference was held in San Antonio, TX in early December. I was lucky enough to attend with Rainier's President Jeb Binns and Vice President Becca Ritchie. The two sessions I attended fit well with the conference theme of *Unite, Inspire, Lead: Building Equity*.

Julian Vasquez Heilig, who writes the blog *Cloaking Inequity*, led a session about spreading your message via social media. The session was full of hints and tips for a variety of social media platforms and aimed at folks who do more than manage their personal Facebook page. Did you know that on LinkedIn you can tag #edinsights to catch the eye of the Education Editor? For more views of your Facebook photos, upload them through Instagram and link it to your Facebook page. Julian is a wealth of knowledge when it comes to using social media to promote your message.



I also attended "Building Equity through Relationships" with Camie Walker. She believes we can build union strength through people, not just politics. Her local has taken a personal approach to building their strength. They realize that schools are a home away from home for teachers and believe their union should be seen as a nurturing and supportive environment. Their local made it a priority to provide trainings on pedagogy through their own trainings. They also believe in developing members' strengths so that educators are "in the driving seat." Camie is a strong advocate for educators sharing their stories to reclaim the narrative about public schools and flood it with positive messages.

The NCUEA Fall Conference is a wonderful opportunity to learn about what's happening at the national level, to network with educators from across the country, and to build your strengths as a union leader. Keep your eye out for opportunities to attend in the future!

2017 Bill of Rights for Washington's Public School Students

"It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders, without distinction or preference on account of race, color, caste, or sex." - Washington Constitution, 1889

Washington's 1.1 million public school students have a constitutional right to an amply funded public education, regardless of their ZIP Code or family background. Quality public education is a civil right in our state.

As parents, educators and community members, we demand that the 2017 Washington Legislature comply with the Supreme Court's McCleary decision and amply fund the basic education the Constitution guarantees our students.

We believe all Washington public school students have the following rights:

- **All students have a right to well-maintained schools, current curriculum, safe transportation and adequate school supplies. Students must have access to 21st century technology. Special education, gifted, learning assistance program, and transitional bilingual education for English language learners are essential.**
 - This requires fully funding a high-quality, well-rounded basic education so all children have equal opportunity to succeed.
- **All students have a right to small class sizes and professional support services that provide the individual one-on-one attention they need.**
 - This requires fully funding smaller K-12 class size ratios and additional support services as required by voter-approved I-1351.
- **All students have a right to be taught by caring, committed and qualified teachers and education support professionals.**
 - This requires fully funding competitive, professional base pay and benefits to attract and keep high-quality K-12 school employees, and maintain flexibility for school districts to supplement educators' pay beyond the base state salary to meet local needs.
- **All students have a right to learn in clean and safe school facilities, including ample classroom space equipped with modern technology.**
 - This requires fully funding school construction to modernize existing schools, build new schools and expand classroom capacity.
- **All students have right to attend local public schools that have the flexibility to meet their unique needs.**
 - This requires fully funding basic education while ensuring that parents, educators, and community members have a voice in shaping their public schools, including the ability to approve levies to support enrichment programs beyond basic education.

Council President
[Jeb Binns](#)
 Council Vice President
[Becca Ritchie](#)
 WEA Board Members
[Becca Ritchie](#)
[Sandy Hunt](#)
 UniServ Directors
[Elizabeth Beck](#)
[Kristi Taylor](#)
 UniServ Field Assistant
[Lori Fleck](#)

Upcoming Dates

WEA Representative Assembly
 Spokane Convention Center –
 April 13-15

Ed Forum – April 27, 5:00-8:00 at
 Billy Baroo's – Special Ed Safety

Pre-Retirement seminar – May 5
 (5:00-8:00) and May 6 (8:30-4:00)
 – RUC shared conference room

Restorative Justice Event – May
 18, 5:00-8:00 – Renton PAC

RECN event – May 24, 5:00-7:00 –
 RUC shared conference room

Newsletter edited by
 Becca Ritchie and Rich Coker

President's Message

Greetings Rainier,

Three-quarters of the way through the 2016-17 school year and the question remains: Is the end in sight?

The answer to this question lies squarely in the hands of the State Legislature. First off, let me thank the Rainier members who attended their legislative town halls. It's important to stay present, visible, and relevant throughout this process. Our continued voice and diligence will be required to ensure that the budget finally adopted to fulfill the McCleary decision will be one that we can be proud of and not one that continues to be half-measures and magic money. Thanks for all you have done, and I implore you to keep the pressure on! Tune in to the WEA's Our Voice for updates and actions.

Over the past two months, your Rainier board of directors and governance has initiated and completed the hiring process for our new UniServ Director to fill the vacancy left by Alan Sutliff who transitioned to the Kent UniServ. Kristi Taylor, our new director, has taught and worked in several states across the country. Most recently, Kristi has worked as a state-based organizer with the WEA playing key roles in bargaining work and member organizing events. The hiring team believes that Kristi's skills round out Rainier and will serve us well now and in the future. Transition planning is underway and we should have Kristi on board by mid April. Thank you Alan for your years of service and welcome Kristi!

I hope Spring Break recharges you, brothers and sisters. It's going to be an uphill run to the finish line.

In Solidarity,
 Jeb Binns



Check out the WEA Professional Development Network:
<https://www.washingtonea.org/pd/>