

# WEA-Riverside UniServ Council

# Newsletter

May, 2018

*We are the teachers, specialists and support employees who dedicate our professional lives to creating great public schools in Southwest Washington.*

## NOW'S THE TIME TO NEGOTIATE BIG PAY RAISES



In its McCleary decision, the Washington Supreme Court ordered legislators to amply fund basic education, including competitive, professional salaries to attract and keep the qualified, committed, caring certificated and support staff our students need to be successful.

WEA members had to fight hard for years to make it happen, but the Legislature has increased state funding for public schools by billions, including \$2 billion to increase educator salaries in the 2018-19 school year. Polling consistently shows that an overwhelming majority of voters support increasing pay for school employees. There's a well-documented shortage of qualified educators, and educator pay lags far behind comparable professions.

With the facts and numbers on our side, WEA Board has set ambitious goals for negotiating pay raises for the upcoming school year. How large of a pay raise will be decided at the local level through negotiations – which is why it's crucial for WEA members to organize and show that we have power in numbers.

No pay raise is automatic. We have to fight for it, or we won't get it. School administrators already are balking and making excuses for why they don't want to provide pay increases. Their arguments are simply wrong: Now is the time to negotiate fair and equitable pay increases for all certificated and classified K-12 employees.

**WEA members across the state stand united together – let's organize and negotiate the big pay raises we need and deserve. The court ordered it. The Legislature funded it. Voters support it. Now let's do it!**



## MAKING THE CASE FOR INCREASING EDUCATOR SALARIES

### THE TRUTH ABOUT EDUCATOR PAY

Districts have the money & the public supports pay raises.

1. 78 percent of Americans say educators are underpaid & deserve higher salaries. **True!**
2. \$2 billion in additional state funding for salaries because of the Supreme Court's McCleary order **True!**
3. That equates to about \$9,300 for each cert and \$12,600 for each ESP. **True!**
4. \$1.5 billion in school district reserves. **True!**
5. In 2018, Washington voters approved \$4 billion in local levy money. **True!**
6. 15 percent raises for teachers and 37 percent for support staff are realistic goals. **True!**

### THE EDUCATOR PAY GAP IS GETTING WORSE

An April 4 report from the Economic Policy Institute reported: "Teacher pay (accounting for inflation) actually fell... from 1996 to 2015, while pay for other college graduates increased.... In short, the teacher pay gap—the difference between what teachers earn in weekly wages compared with similarly educated and experienced workers—has widened significantly." According to EPI, Washington teachers make 73.5 percent of what their colleagues with comparable education earn in other professions. In 2017, education support professionals earned just 60 percent of the statewide average pay.

### OSPI SAYS NEGOTIATE PAY RAISES LOCALLY

Administrators in some districts want to defer to OSPI, but here's what Superintendent of Public Instruction Chris Reykdal wrote in an April 17 memo to school district superintendents. "At the end of the day, this is a local collective bargaining state and where you get to at the local table is likely the most appropriate answer for your district and your local community. (We) will not weigh in or make judgments about the details or considerations of local bargaining proposals."

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## **COURT EMPHASIZES TRI PAY IS STILL PERFECTLY LEGAL**

Additional pay for Time, Responsibility and Incentive (TRI) is still allowed under the new law. The Washington Supreme Court said the law “still permits school districts to supplement (state-funded base pay) for instructional programs and activities beyond the program of basic education.”

## **COURT WAS CLEAR: THE NEW \$ IS FOR HIGHER PAY**

The Supreme Court was clear that the additional state funding approved by the Legislature in March was specifically for educator pay raises. Last fall, the Court unanimously directed lawmakers to invest “a billion dollars in fully funding the salary increases by the 2018-19 school year.” That’s in addition to the \$1 billion already allocated for educator pay raises.

## **LEVY FUNDING DECREASES, BUT STATE FUNDING INCREASES**

It’s true -- locally approved school levy amounts are going to decrease beginning in 2019. A new law caps how much districts can collect from voter-approved levies. At the same time, state funding for public schools is going to increase substantially because of the Supreme Court’s McCleary decision. End result: Every school district in the state is going to have substantially MORE money in each of the next three school years. Billions more. Funding may fluctuate, but districts will have MORE money overall than they have this year. And because of McCleary and the Constitution, legislators can’t reduce future state funding unless there’s a legitimate academic reason for reducing basic education funding – and there’s not.

## **VOTERS SUPPORT HIGHER PAY FOR EDUCATORS**

A recent Associated Press poll found that 78 percent of Americans believe teachers deserve higher pay. And in Other polls show similar support. According to an April 26 NPR report, “(A)n NPR/Ipsos poll shows strong support among Americans for improving teachers’ pay and for their right to strike. Just 1 in 4 Americans believe teachers in this country are paid fairly. Nearly two-thirds approve of national teachers’ unions, and three-quarters agree teachers have the right to strike. That last figure includes two-thirds of Republicans, three-quarters of independents and nearly 9 in 10 Democrats.” Voters support educators. School administrators at the bargaining table should remember that.

## **FAIR PAY FOR EDUCATORS IS A GENDER EQUITY ISSUE**

On April 26, The New York Times reported, “About three-quarters of American teachers are women.

When the modern teachers’ union movement began in Chicago in 1897, it was an explicitly feminist movement with close ties to the suffragists. Teachers are relatively underpaid compared with other skilled workers because historically they have been women. Many policymakers assumed teachers were being supported by higher-earning spouses or other male relatives.” More than 120 years later, we’re still fighting for fair pay and equity with other professionals.

## **DEBUNKING ADMINISTRATION EXCUSES**

*School district administrators have many excuses; None of them are legitimate!*

1. “We’d love to give educators a raise, but we can’t afford it.” **Not true!**
2. “We’d love to give educators a big raise, but the new law won’t let us.” **Not true!**
3. “Negotiated pay raises are limited to 3.1 percent or less.” **Not true!**
4. “It is one-time money from the state.” **Not true!**
5. “Our school district will have less money overall in future years.” **Not true!**
6. “Our school district has more important budget needs than investing in quality educators.” **Not true!**

## **SCHOOL DISTRICT LAWYERS ARE WRONG**

School boards have hired high-priced attorneys who are inaccurately telling district administrators that pay raises in 2018-19 must be limited to inflation or the statewide average salary. That’s false. The new law lists seven different ways for calculating maximum pay raises, and those are just two of them. Collective bargaining will determine which methods are used to calculate the allowable pay raises in a district. (School district administrators are always looking for reasons to limit pay raises – this is nothing new!)

## **SUPERINTENDENTS PREDICT ‘CONTENTIOUS BARGAINING’**

Superintendents across the state have made it clear: They don’t want to negotiate the significant pay raises the Supreme Court ordered, the state funded and voters support. Instead, administrators say they plan to fight us – which is why it’s crucial for us to organize and stand united together. The Washington Association of School Administrators says, “It appears that school districts will face an aggressive round of bargaining with their teachers. That will occur as a historic new funding system is rolled out. Districts leaders will have no experience with that system to help guide their decisions during negotiations. In the face of such uncertainty, they will likely take a conservative



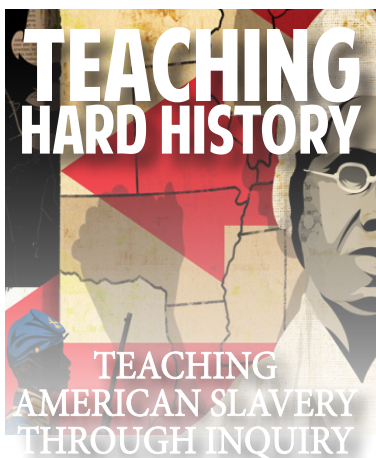
approach before making any long-term financial commitments. All of this *adds up to what could be one of the most contentious bargaining seasons in recent memory.*"

### ADMINISTRATORS ADMIT THERE'S BILLIONS MORE IN FUNDING

Administrators admit there's billions in new K-12 funding, but they don't want to invest it in pay raises for their employees. They're even willing to risk strikes this fall. This is what WASA's executive director blogged on April 25: "Wouldn't it be ironic if in the midst of rolling out billions more in state K-12 funding, we see strikes or near-strikes in a record number of school districts?" No local union member wants to go on strike – our goal is a fair contract that our members can ratify with pride. If administrators don't want to invest in their own employees – the people who work with students – then it's fair to ask them: "What do YOU think is a higher budget priority for our district?"

### TEACHING THE FUNDAMENTAL 'HARD HISTORY' OF AMERICAN SLAVERY

Schools are not adequately teaching the history of American slavery; educators are not sufficiently prepared to teach it; and textbooks do not have enough material about it. As a result, students lack a basic knowledge of the important role it played in shaping the United States and the impact it continues to have on race relations in America, this according to a recent study by the Southern Poverty Law Center's Teaching Tolerance Project.



"If we are to move past our racial differences, schools must do a better job of teaching American slavery and all the ways it continues to impact American society, including poverty rates, mass incarceration, and education," said Teaching Tolerance Director Maureen Costello, who taught history to high school students for decades.

The investigation - conducted over the course of one year - revealed the need for far better and much more comprehensive classroom instruction across the board. That's when the Teaching Tolerance staff rolled up its sleeves and began developing a collection of materials to help teachers change the way slavery is taught in American classrooms. These resources are available now: [www.tolerance.org/hardhistory](http://www.tolerance.org/hardhistory).

### MUSIC & ARTS GRANT OPPORTUNITY



Enrich your students' learning with a Music & Arts Grant. Apply to receive up to \$500.00 for your school's program.

The California Casualty Music & Arts Grant was established to provide support for K-12 public schools negatively impacted by reduced budgets. California Casualty has partnered with education associations for nearly 70 years. We understand the importance of music and arts education for children. As a member of one of our partnering education associations, you can apply for a grant award up to \$500 for a music or art need at your school. Keep the creativity flowing with a music or art grant from California Casualty! Apply today! [CalCasMusicArtsGrant.com](http://CalCasMusicArtsGrant.com).

### EDUCATOR APPRECIATION DAYS AT WILD WAVES THEME & WATER PARK



Wild Waves Theme & Water Park is celebrating Educators this June at Educator Appreciation Days.

Wild Waves wants to celebrate you and invite you and your family to experience a full day of fun with over 70 acres of rides, slides, and attractions at Washington's largest Theme & Water Park!

**Kick off your summer right with a day of fun in the sun!**

#### Educator Appreciation Days Picnic Event Info:

**Dates: Saturday-Sunday, June 23-24, 2018**

- Ticket includes all-day Theme & Water Park admission, plus yard games & private catered pizza lunch in Cascades Picnic Grove covered pavilion from 12-2pm. Park hours are 10:30am-7pm.
- Pricing: Only \$20.99 plus tax per ticket (reg. admission is \$42.99!)

#### Good Any Day Tickets (valid for admission only):

Visit any time this season and save over \$20 per ticket!  
Spring tickets \$12.99+tax (Valid for use May 5-June 15)  
Summer tickets \$22.73+tax (Valid for use June 16-Sept 3)

Buy online at [tinyurl.com/EducAppWW2018](http://tinyurl.com/EducAppWW2018)

Questions? Contact: Casey Manning at [CManning@WildWaves.com](mailto:CManning@WildWaves.com) or 253-661-8042.

## STEAM NIGHT AT HOCKINSON HEIGHTS

Hockinson Heights Elementary hosted their third annual Multicultural Night. This year, the event had a new twist and went by the name "Multicultural STEAM Night." On April 19, more than 800 people consisting of students, their families, and community members, attended the event. Those who attended engaged their senses with



other cultures as they admired an array of artwork, viewed and touched artifacts from other countries, tasted diverse cuisines, as well as listened to and watched music and movement from various

cultures, with each elementary grade level showcasing a different continent. Additionally, students and their families participated in exciting activities that brought together Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM). One of the favorite activities was making kazoos!

A performance by the amazing professional dance group, the Rainbow Dance Co., was another highlight of the evening. With hundreds seated in a fully darkened gym, illumination, puppetry, dance, and multicultural music came together in an unforgettable performance titled "iLummiDance Revealed." Some specially selected students were even able to take part in a portion of the performance as they learned how multiple components and people can

work together to create STEAM inspired dance.



Many contributors aided in the success of the Multicultural STEAM Night, which was organized by five elementary teachers: Ms. Einerson (K-2 Art), Mrs. O'Neill-Bratt (3-5 Art), Mrs. Ramirez (K-2 Music), Ms. Miles (3-5 Music), and Mrs. Perry (K-5 Tech/Library). In addition to these main organizers and the

generous grants from PWT and WEA-Riverside that helped to make this event possible, there were also many National Honor Society students from Hockinson High School, parents, community members, teachers, and elementary school students who helped make the event a success through their volunteered time.

Celebrating diversity as a community was a unifying and enriching experience that allowed connections to be made to the diverse world in which we all live, and it sparked rich conversation among students with their teachers, families, and fellow community members. After the conclusion of the event, many are already eagerly anticipating the 2019 Multicultural STEAM Night!



## CALENDAR

- 5/16 RUC Council Meeting -  
Covington Middle School
- 5/19 K-12 Labor Ed Workshop -  
Clark College CTC Building
- 5/31 Coordinated Bargaining - RUC Office
- 6/6 RUC Exec. Board Meeting - RUC Office
- 6/30-7/1 NEA-RA - Minneapolis, MN

## END OF YEAR MARKERS

Do you have a basketful of markers just like this? Some work, some don't. Did you know that Crayola recycles used markers (including other brands) so you don't have to throw them in the trash? Follow the link below for directions on how to send them back to Crayola. Guess what? They even pay for shipping! All you need to do is box them up, print out the label and send it! PLEASE pass this on so that we can spare thousands of markers being thrown in the trash. <http://www.crayola.com/colorcycle.aspx>



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