

~TEA Advocate~

TUMWATER EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

1619 STATE AVENUE NE, OLYMPIA, WA 98506

PHONE: 360-352-5256 ~ FAX: 360-352-7361 ~ TUMWATEREA.ORG

DEAR COLLEAGUES – MAY 2019

As the 2018-19 school year comes to a close, I think it's safe to say that this has been a year like no other in the history of the TEA and the Tumwater School District. Having experienced the first strike in the history of the District, this year has been filled with celebration, accomplishment, and now anxiety.



Due to legislative implications, there has been a cloud hanging over the heads of everyone in Tumwater as the District has tried to come to terms with financial challenges related to revenue from the state. At press time that cloud still looms, but there will be no Reductions in Force (RIFs). The District Leadership Team is still trying to assess the implications of the latest revenue numbers from the state, and per Superintendent Bash's staff letter sent out on the eve of Memorial Day weekend, final staffing decisions have not yet been completed.

One thing for certain, though, is that the gains made in last summer's contract negotiations will have positive impacts on education in our community and schools for years to come. The TEA Bargaining Team negotiated a great contract that made our classrooms safer, improved our Special Education language, and made

compensation a priority to help recruit and retain great teachers in Tumwater. None of this could have been accomplished without the courageous decision of the TEA membership to refuse to

start the school year without a ratified agreement. The Tumwater community knows the value of those who teach their children day in and day out, and it was their support that helped keep us strong. It was their support that helped make the District realize that Tumwater Teachers Deserved a Fair Contract.

When we started negotiations with the District on May 8th of 2018, it was never the intention of the TEA to go on strike. However, once our members made the decision in the waning days of August, we were in it for the long haul. And we had to be in order to be successful. As I shared with a television reporter immediately after reaching a tentative agreement on Sept. 16th of last year, 'TEA members will be able to look back on this struggle we've been through and know that we did something epic for the community and for our students...and for our families.' I think we can all say that we wish we hadn't had to go on strike, but we were all part of something special in the history of the TEA. We are Union Strong!

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TEA ELECTIONS

Congratulations to Rhonda Crawford and Chris Hudson for being elected as TEA Vice President and TEA Treasurer respectively. Both ran unopposed for their positions and were declared elected at the April Rep Council meeting per TEA

Bylaws.



Elections for the three TEA Members at Large will take place the first week of June. Please see the following candidate statements below. Thanks to all who chose to run for all positions and for

being willing to serve your fellow TEA members in a leadership capacity.

- DJ Brimer - Thank you for the opportunity to serve our TEA members! Please vote for me as TEA Executive Board Member-at-Large. My service began as Communications Coordinator during the strike. This year has been an opportunity for continued professional union growth while I've served our TMS family as a Building Representative. I have also been an active member on the TEA Article 2 committee this year. TEA Representative Council members elected me to attend the WEA 2019 Representative Assembly in Spokane, where I provided strong representation for our TEA members. Please vote for me to continue representing TEA with passion and strength!
- Katie Gates - I'm Katie Gates and I've taught special education at PGS for 18 years. I've been the TEA treasurer for 12 years and a building rep for 17. I stay involved because I care about our members being treated fairly. I speak up for all teachers, but I also fight for better language and resources for all of us in special services. I believe the exec board should try to have at least one person from special services, as we have unique needs. Next year, I want to focus on improving evaluation language for special service teachers. Thank you!
- Justin McKaughan - I'm running for re-election as a member-at-large. This past year, I've listened to the members and brought their voice to the table when making decisions. I bring my experience

in technology and communications to the members and want to keep our union strong, being reflective on what we've accomplished as a local association. I take our voices to the WEA and NEA representative assemblies and want to continue to hear from you on how we can improve the WEA and NEA, as well as TEA. I would greatly appreciate your vote!

- Henry Valz - It is an honor to be nominated for a position on the TEA Exec Board. I am also very excited to see the future direction of the Tumwater School District under the leadership of the new school board and superintendent. As a member of the Exec Board I hope to involve the TEA more in local decision-making, especially with the school board. I also believe it is an important time to build better relationships with the TAPP and TOPA unions. Thank you for your consideration.

SNOW MAKE-UP DAYS

As you all know, we have to make up the days of school, which were cancelled due to snow and ice earlier this year. The District applied for and received four waiver days from OSPI. Those days do not have to be made up by students; however, certificated staff are still responsible for that time. The TEA negotiated three of those days to be 'deemed done,' which means teachers will be credited with the many extra hours we all put in before or after school, on weekends, or working through our lunches and breaks on any given day. That leaves one day that must be worked, and the District is offering professional development the day after students finish. This is an opportunity to earn free clock hours.

June 25th will be the PD day for certificated staff, and the District will soon be sharing more information on that front. Just like any other workday, appropriate leave can be used on that day. Sick leave, personal leave, or longevity leave would all be considered appropriate leave. If you choose to use leave for that day, you will have to apply for leave and fill out the appropriate

paperwork, or you will not be paid for that day. Your July paycheck will reflect that fact. If you are not going to attend the June 25th PD day, do not forget to put in for leave.

IS YOUR CERTIFICATE EXPIRING?

Did you know that maintaining your certification is your responsibility? That also means that you are also responsible for the renewal of your teaching certificate.



OSPI has an online procedure where educators can manage their certifications and endorsements. The OSPI e-Certification service enables educators to:

- Apply for credentials online
- Monitor application status
- Receive expiration and renewal reminders
- Print certificates
- Update contact information

OSPI provides online training and information about the e-Certification service. Anyone renewing their certificate will need to maintain the required certification and/or endorsements completely online.

Please note:

- Certificated staff with an expiration date of June 30, 2019 on their certificate must start the renewal process ASAP to guarantee maintenance of a valid certification before the certificate expires.
- Do not wait until the last minute, as you might not be able to complete the requirements prior to the expiration date.
- **YOU MAY BE REMOVED FROM THE CLASSROOM WITHOUT PAY IF YOUR CERTIFICATE EXPIRES.**
- National Board Certified teachers (NBCT) are still required to renew their certificates prior to the expiration date. Being a NBCT does not change your responsibility for renewing your certification.

REFLECTIONS ON WEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY

Adrienne Johnson (BLE Kindergarten)

I had the pleasure of attending the RA for the second time this year! I felt more confident about the process and information as a second year delegate. One thing I am reminded of each year—the challenges we are having in Tumwater are present throughout the state and there are other educators who share the same struggles and concerns. Big themes this year included social/emotional supports for students AND teachers, the need for more counselors, and celebrating the diversity of ALL educators. Attending RA confirms how proud I am to work in Tumwater. We have a strong local and community support. This isn't true for every community in our state. We got multiple shout outs for our bargaining efforts as well. Spending time with fellow Tumwater delegates was one of my favorite parts of the RA experience! We all represent a unique part of Tumwater in our daily job titles, but we shared common ground in our many conversations. I was thankful for the conversations and perspectives of our Tumwater team and for those all around our state. AND the biggest highlight for me... I got to meet and get a picture with Kim Mead! I am so thankful for her strong leadership and service! Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to represent Tumwater through this experience.

Kris Kramer (THS History)

This past April I was proud to represent Tumwater Educators at the yearly Washington Education Association Representative Assembly. As the largest union in the State, this yearly assembly truly sets the agenda for the coming year. As a political science major I love seeing direct democracy in action! Every single issue is debated, and debated, and debated.... no one has a veto. One of the best moments was when leaders from a different school district had our brand new Tumwater contract language about safety pulled up on their tablet. They wanted more information about how we were able to get such strong protections in it and asked if they could use it in their upcoming bargain. WE are leaders around the state! WE stood strong in solidarity for our students, our

working conditions and our livelihoods. Never forget that together we are amazing!!!!!!

Thank you for all your support, encouragement and love this past year. Our newest members are committed and passionate. We are in good hands as we move into the future.

Justin McKaughan (DO TECH TOSA)

This is my 2nd WEA RA. I was excited to see democracy in action, even when it gets late. The election for President and Vice President of the WEA was hotly contested and the President's race went into a 2nd round when Larry Delaney and Stephen Miller captured the top 2 out of 3. Mandy Manning, 2018 Teacher of the Year, gave her support to Larry. The line for voting filled the convention center, with Miller and Delaney's camps actively campaigning outside of the convention floor while we waited to vote. Educators were passionate about the direction of the WEA and I'm excited to work with Larry Delaney, who ultimately won the election. Larry came out on the line with us on day 13 of the strike and he was humble with his words of solidarity and encouragement when we were 13 days out of our classrooms. He's currently a high school math teacher, local president, and a regional president up in the Fourth Corner. His wife is a Kindergarten teacher.

I want to encourage our members to put their hat in the ring to run for a delegate seat next year. It's quite the experience to be around 1000 educators from across the state. If you have questions about the process or how things work at the RA, please hit me up.

Sara Gorski (BLE SPED)

This year I was able to share the experience of being a WEA RA attendee. After the strike in the Tumwater School District I decided that I needed to take a more active and informed part in my union. WEA RA provided me with another opportunity to become more connected with my union and better educated me on how things work.

Bearing witness to the procedures and taking part in them showed me that the union is looking

at the issues that impact all union members. I have a better sense of self as a union member after taking part in the WEA RA.

I would highly recommend that all union members attend the WEA RA, it really connects members to the process and creates a deeper understanding of what the union is working toward and the bigger picture in general.

WEA RA also helped me connect with my TEA reps as well, building a deeper sense of community on the local level.

DJ Brimer (TMS Science)

This year was my first experience as a WEA RA delegate. It was great to follow the leadership of our other experienced TEA delegates in attendance because they were on location to help out us new folks. The most striking aspect of our WEA representative assembly to me was the process of unbridled democracy in action through the format of parliamentary procedure. Truly, every single delegate had a voice on equal footing with the myriad of other delegates in attendance. The TEA Rep Council voted for us to attend on behalf of the TEA, so we brought your voice to the RA in full force. In every instance where a vote was required, each member of the TEA delegation thought extensively, critically, and holistically about how each vote would impact the TEA general membership as a collective body. We collaborated on many occasions within our TEA delegate group when debate was underway to ask questions and determine how our vote would impact TEA members back home in Tumwater. This year's RA was certainly an eye opening view into the way our WEA union fights hard to ensure our students receive a world-class public education. While many perspectives, ideologies, and social orientations were present and voiced, the final vote ultimately determined the outcome for charting our next course into a critical 2019-2020 school year. I will certainly seek the TEA Rep Council vote to attend next year's RA again as a delegate to represent our strong union. Thank you for the opportunity!