

WEA Board of Directors Report

By Denny Cleary, Mary Lindsey, Mark Murray & Dorcie Wellman

WEA Fourth
Corner Uniserv

Volume 1, Issue 5
March 31, 2007

March WEA Board Meeting Precedes WEA Representative Assembly March 29-31, 2007

The Washington Education Association's Board of Directors met in Tacoma for two days before the representative assembly. The Board reviewed all Constitution and Bylaws Amendments, Standing Rules Amendments, New Business Items, New Resolutions and Continuing Resolutions Amendments which were submitted prior to the representative assembly. A majority of items recommended by the Board were also approved by the RA. Titles of approved business items included; Letter to the Superintendent of Public Instruction, ESP Living Wage Campaign, Health and Safety Program, WEA Small/Rural Local Affiliate Release Time Grant

Programs, K-12 Fine and Performing Arts Education, Public School Traffic Safety Education Funding, Equitable Allocation Formulas, Workload Task Force, SERS 3 Enrollment Options, True Cost of the WASL, Gainsharing Lawsuit, Legislative Action to Repeal the WASL for Students with Severe Disabilities, Adequate Caseloads for School Nurses and WEA-PAC Membership Goal.

WEA Continuing Resolution changes included a new resolution concerning inclusive diversity.

WEA Constitution and Bylaws changes included adding four-year higher education WEA Board representation. Ethnic minority representation guarantees were maintained in current language.

Inside this issue:

WA Adequacy Funding Report	2
2007 Legislative Session Progress Report	2
<i>NEWS</i> Lawsuit	2
WEA Member Survey Findings	2
Open Letter to Supt. of Public Instruction	2

WEA Survey for All Special Education Staff (current or recent)

April 11th - 30th

Information gathered will be used to help us advocate
at the bargaining table and the public policy arena.

Logon to www.washingtonea.org/survey

Reports to the WEA Board of Directors

Washington Adequacy Funding Report

Although the WEA funded the WA Adequacy Funding Report, no changes were made to this independent study of the most precise estimate of possible necessary funding. The current basic education definition does not address funding.

The study states that it would take \$11,678 per student for schools to meet state and federal standards. This would equal a 45% increase in school funding using the 2004-05 budget.

With increased state funding, there would be four major changes resulting in classroom-centered supports, educator supports, instructional supports and learning environment supports. Classroom centered supports include full day kindergarten, class size reduction in K-3 to 17, career academics at high school, and additional special education and ELL staff. Other supports include professional development, summer school programs, expanded extra-curricular programs, improved campus security and additional support staff.

Briefs....

NEWS (Network for Excellence in WA Schools) has filled a lawsuit with the state concerning funding. The WEA and Arlington School District are included in a wide variety of groups who have joined forces.

The WEA Member Survey taken this past February reported that educators spend almost \$300 out of pocket for their students. Members state that 75% have problems with retirement plans. Less than 50% of ESPs are not making a living wage.

2007 Legislative Session Progress Report

WEA staff reported to the Board by quoting Albert Einstein. "Politics is harder than physics".

WEA supports fully funding basic education in six years. There also needs to be a down payments in class size reduction, full day kindergarten and WASL reform. WEA has also supported the Rule of 85, simple majority for school funding elections and indoor air quality.

The legislative budget has shown an increase in funding at 210% for early education, 14% for K-12 and 18% for higher education.

This legislative session is drawing to a close. Members are encouraged to e-mail (from home) legislators and the governor, and to call colleagues to do the same.

Our power = Our collective voice!

A letter to the superintendent of public instruction was recommended by the WEA Board and approved by the RA. WEA will collect signatures for the open letter to the superintendent concerning areas of critical concern and asking her to take immediate action. Target date for delivering the letters is on National Teacher Day on May