



‘Potentiality Detective’

Walla Walla Community College’s Susan Palmer opens her doors and her heart for her students

*Ahead in 2018: United in advocacy for our students,
our public schools and our profession*

A matter of trust

“Trust me, I can get you a great deal for a lot less. Just sign this piece of paper with your address and Social Security number and we’ll make sure it happens.” I’m listening to the radio, stuck in commute-hour traffic, and the radio hosts are talking about what to do if someone offers you a deal that seems too good to be true.

Who falls for this stuff? I yell at the dashboard, “Don’t do it!” We all know that if it seems too good to be true, it probably is. And yet, people make the mistake because they don’t know the truth.

But how do you know? Who are the individuals that you trust?

I trust my colleagues whom I taught with and the people I work with every day. I trust public school educators, not only the individuals I had, but also the educators of my children and now, my granddaughters who are in public school. I trust that by working together, we can make great gains for our profession and for our students.

We have done so in the past, and will continue to do so in the future.

This issue of trust is important right now because there are people who don’t like public education, or unions, and they are trying to take our rights away. One group, called the Freedom Foundation, is knocking on some of our members’ doors to urge them to “get a refund.” What they leave out is that you are dropping your union membership.

So, ask yourself, “Who do I trust?”

...the 92,000 educators of WEA, standing together for our students, each other, fully funded schools, better pay and benefits, smaller class sizes, and the ability to negotiate wages and working conditions with our school districts?

Or

...the Freedom Foundation? They oppose our union and our work to achieve better pay and benefits, smaller class sizes and our ability to bargain contracts with our districts. They represent and are funded by out-of-state billionaires who want to get rid of unions and take public dollars from schools to use them for private purposes. They want to silence our ability to advocate for public education.

If the Freedom Foundation — or their shell group called, “Choice for Teachers” — sends you an email or a mailer or knocks on your door with a message that you can get a refund, or pay nothing and get the same results, I hope you’ll remember me yelling at the radio “Don’t do it!” Then ask yourself, what do they gain from it? Why do they want me to quit my union? Do they believe in public education? Do they want to weaken my union to diminish the power of our many voices? A refund may sound like a good deal, but what if it hurts our abilities to bargain hard for

all of us? Will we all have less voice, less power in negotiating our next contract?

So, who do you trust? I hope your immediate response is your colleagues and union. We believe in great public schools for all students, the right to bargain contracts that meet the needs of colleagues and districts ... the right to have a voice for those who need it the most: our students.

I trust you.

Kim Mead, WEA President



Kim Mead

*We believe in
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A tiny local has a **big win**

Centerville hadn't pushed hard for contract gains in years. This year, they decided to seek 150 hours of additional pay, but were denied. So they decided to stand tough, and will end up with 180 additional paid hours instead.

With five teachers, the entire faculty is the bargaining team.

Centerville had never been the center of union activism in Washington.

The town's K-8 school has five teachers and a half-dozen more support staff to transport students to and from school, prepare and serve healthy meals, clean and care for the school building, answer the phone and assist with teaching students in the classroom. The full-time principal is only a recent addition. The superintendent is contracted to work one day a month.

"It's a very unique school," says Fern Johnson, the fifth-sixth grade teacher. In Centerville, everyone teaches two grades. Each day is a half-hour longer, too, because schedules have to include time to ferry students to Goldendale, where 9th- to 12th-graders attend high school.

"Teachers that were here previously have been here for about 30 years," Johnson adds. "There were long

periods of time with no turnover. Very, very, dedicated teachers, very selfless — as most teachers are."

So when work demands increased, when teaching duties crowded out prep time, Centerville's teachers took on the extra load and demanded nothing in return. Their wages fell behind, with three extra days to prepare for the school year, but nothing more.

Recent retirements opened the door for change as three new teachers joined the staff. Because of the bus schedule, however, it was hard to shorten the length of the school day. With each teacher already teaching two grades, no specialists offer an instructional respite to create planning time.

With very few options to cut back on work, Centerville's teachers decided the only solution was to ask for additional hours of pay.

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A Year of Unity

Unity Agenda outlines WEA members' legislative priorities for 2018

Neva Luke taught for 30 years in the Issaquah School District. Her advocacy for students and educators didn't end when she retired in 2010 — Luke now represents WEA's retired members as president of WEA-Retired.



Neva Luke

“As union members and educators, WEA-Retired is united with WEA in our advocacy for our students, our public schools and our profession,” Luke says.

Luke's advocacy will continue when the 2018 legislative session begins Jan. 8. The WEA Board recently adopted a Unity Agenda — the association's top legislative priorities for the coming year. The Unity theme reflects the diversity of WEA's 92,000 members: retired educators, aspiring educators, K-12 classified and certificated staff and higher education employees.

Luke says that with the political threats and other challenges facing public education, it's more important than ever for WEA members to stand united.

Here is WEA's Unity Agenda for the 2018 legislative session:

United for higher education employees

Provide full and equal collective bargaining rights for community and technical college faculty

United for K-12 classified and certificated employees

Fix the flawed 2017 education funding plan, including raising the levy lid, improving the staff funding formula and passing a school construction budget

United for aspiring educators

Approve student loan forgiveness

United for retired educators

Restore cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for Plan 1 retirees, increase health care subsidy for all

United for our students

Support the right of all students to a quality public education, regardless of family background or immigration status, including safe schools legislation and protecting financial aid for undocumented students



The Legislature's deadline for amply funding K-12 basic education is Sept. 1, 2018 — less than a year from now. WEA and many of our locals have been major supporters and funders of the McCleary case since the beginning.

Hundreds of WEA members fought back against bad legislation and demanded that the Legislature fund competitive pay and smaller class sizes and many more lobbied for school funding in Olympia this year. The final budget increases K-12 state funding by more than \$6 billion over four years, most of it for educator salaries.



More than 600 WEA members worked to elect Manka Dhingra to the state Senate — restoring a pro-worker, pro-public education majority. With WEA members knocking on doors and talking to voters, connecting with voters in a personal way that no other group did, Dhingra defeated her opponent by double digits in the 45th Legislative District race.

WEA members help change the Senate, win a victory for public education

Pro-union legislation now stands a better chance of passing

Hundreds of WEA members helped elect Democrat Manka Dhingra last month in a special election that flipped control of the state Senate.

Dhingra, the mother of two public school students, represents the Kirkland-Woodinville area east of Seattle, but her election is a victory for students and public schools across Washington.

For the last five years, Senate Republicans were in the majority and controlled the Senate agenda, passing numerous bad policies that were harmful to students and educators — like eliminating teacher certification standards. Fortunately, those proposals didn't pass the Democratically controlled House.

Now, with Dhingra's election and a Democratic Senate majority, the Senate Republican caucus will

have less power to pass bad bills or block good legislation that benefits students and educators.

Here's a good example that directly affects WEA's higher education members: For the last several years, the state House has passed a bill extending equal collective bargaining rights to community and technical faculty members. They're the only public union members in Washington who are barred by law from negotiating salary increases.

The House bargaining bill passed with bipartisan support.

Yet Senate Republican leaders repeatedly killed the bill at the request of college administrators who opposed giving their faculty equal union rights. There are no guarantees, but the bargaining bill stands a much better chance of

The recent increases in state funding and educator salaries, as well as recent victories in contract negotiations, would not have happened without the efforts of WEA and our locals.



Highline College faculty member James Peyton and Bellevue College faculty member Susan Nightingale Miller attended a two-day conference this month with a dozen other college faculty WEA members where they designed plans to connect with state legislators to persuade them to change an antiquated and unjust law which keeps them from collectively bargaining their salaries.

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Supreme Court tells legislators: Invest another \$1B in K-12 pay by September

WEA leaders rallied after the Washington Supreme Court's McCleary school funding hearing in November. The courtroom was packed with educators dressed in red.

\$1 billion.

At a minimum, that's how much additional money the Legislature needs to budget for K-12 classified and certificated salaries by Sept. 1, 2018.

That's what the Washington Supreme Court ruled in a unanimous decision on Nov. 15.

It was the latest court ruling in the McCleary school funding case, which originated more than a decade ago. And while the state is still falling short on funding salaries for educators, earlier this year the Legislature approved a school funding plan that allocates billions of dollars in state funding for K-12 salary increases over the next four years.



Keith Swanson

The court essentially ordered lawmakers to invest more in educator pay, and to do it faster. The upcoming legislative session begins Jan. 8, and WEA will be lobbying the Legislature to fund the \$1 billion as directed by the court.

After more than 10 years of legal wrangling over McCleary, it's important to remember that the case originated with WEA and dozens of our local unions. Without our leadership and funding, it's quite likely there never would have been a McCleary decision. The recent increases in state funding and educator salaries, as well as recent victories in contract negotiations, would not have happened without the efforts of WEA and our locals.

Our success is one reason well-funded right-wing groups like the Freedom Foundation are waging a campaign against public education and our union.

From SENATE, page 5

passing under Democratic leadership in 2018. It's one of WEA's top legislative priorities.



Carla Naccarato-Sinclair

"It's past time for equal bargaining rights for community and technical college faculty so we can finally have the flexibility to provide the compensation that will attract and retain the excellent faculty that our students need and deserve," said Carla Naccarato-Sinclair, WEA higher ed chair. "With

the continued hard work of WEA members and our union allies in Olympia, we can get it done this year."



As Supreme Court justices listen, attorney Tom Ahearne explains how the state is failing to amply fund K-12 public schools as required by the Washington Constitution. WEA and many of our locals have been major supporters and funders of the McCleary case since the beginning.

Keith Swanson, president of the Walla Walla Valley Education Association, puts it this way:

"Without question, there are forces working to break us up so as to limit our influence," Swanson says. "They know that by busting the unions they will weaken our collective efforts to fight for a fully-funded public education system in Washington. By standing together — young and old alike — it will be our unity that will holds us together."



Make sure **OurVoice** is heard in Olympia!

Here are five ways you can stay up to speed with legislative and political issues and actions that affect students, educators and public schools.

1. Text **OURVOICE** to 41411 to get regular legislative and election updates by text message
2. Visit WashingtonEA.org/OurVoice and check out the **OurVoice** blog, the **WEA Unity Agenda** and info about **McCleary** and school funding
3. Like and follow **OurVoice** on Facebook at facebook.com/OurVoiceWEA
4. Follow **OurVoice** on Twitter at [@OurVoiceWEA](https://twitter.com/OurVoiceWEA)
5. Post using the hashtags **#WaEdu** and **#WaLeg**



Members of the Mercer Island Education Association (MIEA) negotiated local pay raises of 12-15 percent this year. MIEA represents both education support professionals and certificated staff, and ESP members won the largest pay raises.

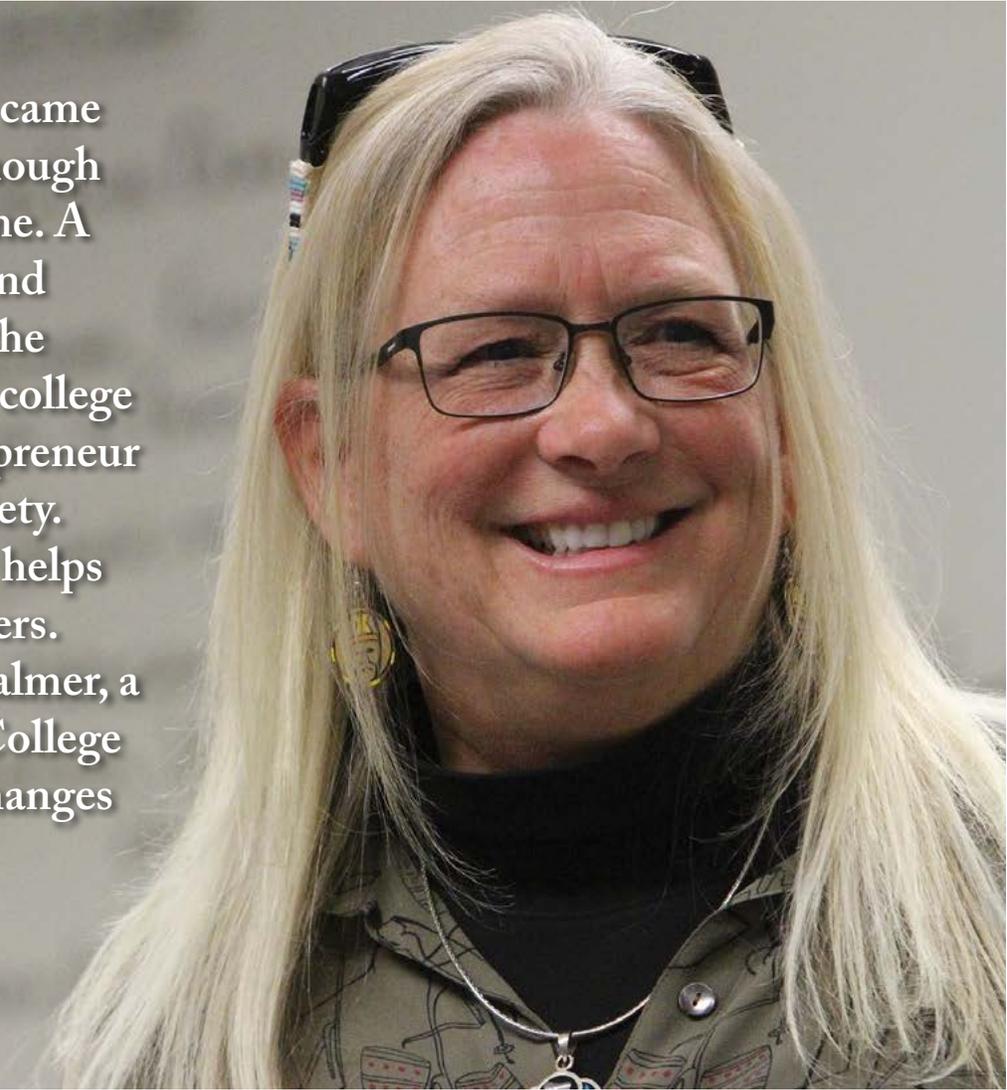
DAY OF UNITY



Day of Unity

On Jan. 10, WEA Uniserv Councils are sending teams of members to the Capitol in Olympia for a WEA Day of Unity. Each team will deliver WEA's Unity Agenda to legislators, explaining our priorities and getting commitments from lawmakers. We'll post ideas on social media for ways all WEA members can stand united on the Day of Unity.

A social worker who came to class without enough bus fare to get home. A high school math teacher and union leader who came to the country undocumented. A college student and budding entrepreneur with dreams to change society. A former convict who now helps transition the worst offenders. Their connection? Susan Palmer, a Walla Walla Community College sociology professor, who changes lives every day.



‘Potentiality Detective’

Walla Walla Community College’s Susan Palmer uncovers the best in her students

Susan Palmer will be honored in February as Washington’s 2018 California Casualty Award for Teaching Excellence recipient. The award, through the NEA Foundation, honors excellence in instructional and professional practice as well as dedication to the profession, community engagement, professional development, attention to diversity, and advocacy for fellow educators.

The tattoos on Joe Field’s hands remind him of the four agreements he strives to live by and the words his college professor Susan Palmer shared with him in his darkest moments: Be impeccable with your word; don’t take anything personally; don’t make assumptions and always do your best. They are the principles from author Don Miguel Ruiz. They are permanent reminders of a code of conduct, much like the lessons Palmer brings to her classes and interactions with her students and colleagues.

Ten years ago, Field, sober and newly released from prison, started school at Walla Walla Community College (WWCC). His first class: sociology with Susan Palmer. He recalls looking at the course syllabus that included a research paper requirement, and nearly walking right out. He says he didn’t even know what the word, sociology, meant, let alone how to spell it. He went to Palmer’s office to tell her he was dropping her course.

Palmer asked him to stay and talk. She told him of her work with teaching a class at the Washington State Penitentiary in Walla Walla. She asked about his education level and his life.

“I just told her, ‘Look, ... I just want to go back home where I belong’ and she said, ‘Look, let me tell you one thing. I will hold your hand and I will walk you through this whole process.’”

“Susan’s mentored me for eight years now, through life, through education, relationships,” Field says of his friend and former professor. “Susan is not just a mentor but a mom like I’ve never had before.”

Palmer, he says, kept him on track. He graduated with honors in 2012, went on to get his bachelor’s degree and master’s in social work from Walla Walla University, and has started JOE’s Place (Justice, Opportunity and Equality Services), which provides transitional services for newly released sex offenders in Walla Walla.

CHANGES LIVES

Palmer is the recipient of Washington’s 2018 NEA Foundation Award in Teaching Excellence. She, along with 37 public educators nationwide, will receive the award from California Casualty in February in Washington, D.C. Awardees are nominated by their peers for dedication to the profession, community engagement, professional development, attention to diversity and advocacy for fellow educators.

Since joining Walla Walla Community College in 1998, Palmer has been an advocate for, and a leader in the college’s Association for Higher Education, a local of WEA. She has served as president-elect, president and on the executive committee, and colleagues say her warmth and leadership was crucial through several contract negotiations as well as a tumultuous period when the Arts and Sciences faculty voted no confidence in the college’s former president. Members from the WWCC AHE recommended Palmer’s nomination for the award.

“Whether in committees or in the classroom, Susan creates a welcoming environment, making each person feel as if he or she is the most important person in the world at that moment,” executive committee members note. “She is famous for arriving to her lectures quite early, so that she can serenely greet each student by name and converse. From this space of calm and cheerful respect, the very difficult topics can be talked about, the issues of

power and privilege that manifest in students’ lives or in the faculty contract. In this way, Susan changes lives.”

Palmer has served on the college’s tenure review committee and chaired the Faculty Senate. Under her leadership as Social Science chair, she brought growth and stability to the department. She champions the right of all people to access higher education. She learned Spanish in order to connect to her Latina/o students and their families. She has worked and co-led efforts to develop plans to close large gaps in student success, especially for low-income students and students of color.

Her reputation as a bridge builder extends into the community. She serves on the board for the STAR Project, which provides guidance and support to re-integrate ex-offenders into the Walla Walla Valley.

Palmer says she is deeply moved by the honor. Over the years, she says she has worked hard to try to understand ideas that are different from her own and to view them through somebody else’s lens.



Susan Palmer inspires students — and colleagues — and helps people with different beliefs find common ground. She brings lessons of inequality and privilege alive through simulations and other assignments and is generous with her encouragement, attention and empathy.

“I feel like I’m a potential or a potentiality detective and I can see potential in students

that they can’t see in themselves,” Palmer says. “I feel like it’s my job to try to pull that out of them and it’s amazing when they see their own potential and start to realize it.”

‘SHE STARTED WALKING WITH ME’

Rocio De La Torre is a case manager for the state Department of Social and Health Services. Six years ago, she stumbled across Palmer when she needed permission to take her class because the quarter had started. Unemployed, savings drained and car repossessed, the young mother said she didn’t have anything when she met Susan.

Palmer allowed her to write some of the informal assignments in Spanish as a way to support her and build her confidence.

“Just knowing that somebody believed in me, just



understanding that somebody saw something in me, I couldn't believe it," she says. "I couldn't believe that somebody thought I was smart, like this girl who went through high school, broken English, broken writing, no education, how can somebody see anything in me other than — like everybody used to tell me that I was less because of my color, because of my gender and the history, the history of Latinos in this country."

"She was the first white person in my life that looked at me," she says. "She looked at me and she looked at me and she treated me like an equal — maybe other people did but it was the first time that I felt it — that it came directly to me."

At times, De La Torre says she would drop by Palmer's office feeling overwhelmed. Many times, Palmer would stay and review and edit papers with her, and found scholarships for her. Even after she moved to Walla Walla University, Palmer followed her progress.

"She didn't just say, 'You're smart, you can do it and move on. She actually grabbed me by the hand and, since then, she has never let it go."

Marc Goff says Palmer helped get him into Whitman College, an opportunity he never would have imagined.

"There's been so many moments that I've come to her for clarity and understanding and she's always created a very conscious space for that," says Goff, whose goal is to attend graduate school at Berkeley and return to the valley "to work with minorities and try to restructure, restructure everything starting with market and local communities."

A final project in Palmer's class helped him launch his own food truck specializing in smoothies. Goff says he wants to address juvenile delinquency issues with the business: provide employment, food, sense of community and creativity.

ADVOCATE

Pasco High School math teacher Miguel Saldaña met Palmer when he was a volunteer in a Spanish class she was taking. He said his former instructor, mentor and friend helped him become a U.S. citizen and convinced him to pursue his passion for teaching and eventual involvement with the union.

"Growing up in Mexico, I didn't have that background about unions. In fact, just by listening to the media, the notion of unions was more negative," he says. "She would always talk about



social justice, human rights, equity and even talked about how power interplays in how we have our institutions.”

Saldaña sought advice from Palmer about leaving his classroom for a year, starting his principal’s credentials program or accepting a one-year WEA state position.

“She said I should actually go for the union position to advocate, organize and explore the structure of our organization,” recalls Saldaña, who was elected this year as a NEA State Director. “That was, probably, the best choice that I made.”

Palmer says she didn’t fully realize until recently how much advocacy is part of the teaching profession.

“It really ought to be and it really clarified, for me, that I advocate for my students; I advocate for my fellow teachers; I advocate for my profession and I’m really proud of the role advocacy plays in my profession and I hope other teachers feel the same.”

“I think foremost, our union members want to be sure that we have the highest quality of education and then after that, it has to do with justice of our occupation, our profession and so forth, but really it’s about the quality of education our students are getting.”

It’s that spirit of kindness, innovation and intellectual rigor that, in part, casts her as a role

model for colleagues and why she’s eagerly sought after as a peer evaluator and on search committees, says Richard Middleton-Kaplan, dean of Arts and Sciences.

“She is fair-minded, brings a large perspective and approaches everyone with a spirit of humanity and understanding and empathy ... without losing track of individuals,” Middleton-Kaplan says. “She’s been an invaluable contributor — not a dominating contributor but one whose words are chosen very carefully and who can bring us to a rational yet human understanding of the issue at hand or the people being discussed.”

He got a glimpse of Palmer’s influence when he met De La Torre during a neighborhood cleanup, not knowing De La Torre was one of Palmer’s former students. De La Torre immediately shared unsolicited praises and personal experiences with Palmer.

“There I am in the morning picking garbage off a hillside in this Walla Walla neighborhood and next to me is a woman, Rocio De La Torre, and she asked me where I work and I tell her and she said ‘Susan Palmer is my angel, ... Susan has done this for hundreds of other people, it’s not just me.’”

“Take Susan’s 19 years here at Walla Walla Community College and multiply Rocio by some number that we don’t know and that’s her influence,” he says of Palmer.

“She always sees everybody as individual human beings,” he says. “As colleagues, we know that she treats us that way and she treats her students that way and that’s what Rocio sensed – here’s somebody who sees me not as a category but as an individual.”

For many, Palmer saves lives.

“She’s always gonna be a part of my life,” Field says. “She’s done a lot of things for a lot of people but for me, I would be in prison if it wasn’t for her saying what she said that day.

“Susan just has a way of making you feel you belong.”



“There’s been so many moments that I’ve come to her for clarity and understanding and she’s always created a very conscious space for that.”

– Marc Goff



“Susan is not just a mentor, but the mom like I’ve never had before.”

– Joe Field

OFFICIAL NOTICE

This is official notice that Washington Education Association will run nominations and elections for the following positions:

NEA State Director (one position available)
WEA UniServ Council Director to the Board
NEA State Delegate
NEA State Delegate At-Large (reserved for the WEA President, WEA Vice President and current NEA State Directors)

NOMINATIONS

Nominations will open **Jan. 22-Feb. 5, 2018**. Nominations will be submitted online. For more information about each position and to see the full timeline please go to www.washingtonea.org/union/elections on the WEA website. This will also be the location to use when submitting an online nomination for these open positions.

All nominations must be made by a member of the Washington Education Association in good standing. **To be eligible for any position the nominee must be a member in good standing.**

ELECTION

This election for WEA UniServ Council Director to the Board and NEA State Delegate and Delegate At-Large shall be by secret ballot vote via an online election website. The election of the NEA State Director will occur at the 2018 WEA Representative Assembly in April 2018.

Elections will be held only for those positions for which the number of nominated candidates exceeds the number of seats to be filled. The election for these contested positions will be held:

Feb. 12, 2018 at 8 a.m. through March 5, 2018 (Midnight)

Candidates for uncontested positions will be deemed elected by acclamation.

WEA UniServ Council Directors to the Board will be elected by a 50 percent +1 majority of votes cast. A majority of the votes cast is not required for the seating of delegates to the WEA and NEA Representative Assemblies. These elections will be held in accordance with the WEA and NEA Constitutions and Bylaws.

The election will be held by electronic ballot. All members will receive an email containing their election credentials.

The WEA Nominations and Elections Chair will receive the online election results on March 6, 2018 and will report these results to the WEA President.

OFFICIAL NOTICE

RUN-OFF ELECTION (if necessary)

In the event no candidate in a contested election receives a majority of the votes cast, a run-off election will be held between the candidates receiving the most votes.

If necessary, run-off elections will be held online:

March 12, 2018 at 8 a.m. through March 26, 2018 (Midnight)

The WEA Nominations and Elections Chair will receive the online run-off election results on March 27, 2018 and will report these results to the WEA President.

The chart below indicates how many positions are available in each WEA UniServ Council. These numbers are an estimate. Official numbers are received from the NEA on/about Jan. 15, 2018.

Council	Membership Total as of 12/6/17	WEA Board 1:1500	NEA State Delegate 1:1000
Kent	1,882	1	1
North Central WEA	3,409	2	3
Pilchuck	4,636	3	4
Puget Sound	5,218	3	5
Rainier	3,575	2	3
Seattle	5,610	3	5
Soundview	2,136	1	2
Spokane	3,253	2	3
Summit	3,599	2	3
Vancouver	1,641	1	1
WEA-Cascade	4,657	3	4
WEA Chinook	5,907	3	5
WEA Eastern Wash.	4,637	3	4
WEA Fourth Corner	5,143	3	5
WEA-Lower Columbia	1,837	1	1
WEA MidState	4,739	3	4
WEA Olympic	5,151	3	5
WEA-Riverside	4,517	3	4
WEA-Sammamish	4,368	2	4
WEA-Southeast	4,952	3	4
WEA-Tacoma	2,242	1	2

Supreme Court considers challenge to our unions

In Roman mythology, Janus was often depicted as a two-faced god — that of beginnings and transitions — who looks to the future and to the past.

It's fitting then, as we move into 2018, that the U.S. Supreme Court will soon hear a case called *Janus v. AFSCME* (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees), in which union representation fees are being challenged. Sometimes called fair share or agency fees, they are what non-union members pay to cover the costs of securing and maintaining the union contract. Even though fee payers aren't union members, they are covered by the contract and earn the same wages, benefits and workplace protections as negotiated on behalf of them and union members. Representation fees were established decades ago under the belief that all people who benefit from a contract should help pay for it.



Dan Bell

This court case was cultivated and funded by corporate billionaires, including the Koch brothers, who want to weaken unions and tip the system even more in their favor. They know that powerful unions are the best route working people have to level the economic playing field for all Americans. Eliminating fair share fees is but one goal they are pursuing to fight our ability to advocate for things like smaller class sizes and better pay for educators.

WEA has members who have worked in non-union states, and they see the value that strong united unions bring for their members in the form of better pay, learning and working conditions, and rights at school.

Dan Bell is an elementary art teacher and building representative in Richland. He and his wife, Janet, Kennewick Education Association president, started their teaching careers in Texas. Their one-page “contract” was really just a list of responsibilities.

“What I learned when we moved to Washington is that you really need the balance of power that a union contract provides. In a school setting, all improvements build upon the ones that came before. If an educator isn't empowered to make suggestions to make things better for their students or their school, nothing will change, nothing will improve,” says Dan Bell. “Our experience in a non-union state was that there was no safety in speaking up. We weren't protected. Because educators have rights and responsibilities here in Washington, the quality of the education our students receive is much better than what we saw in Texas.”

The Bells are active in their locals in the Tri-Cities because they know what's at risk, and it keeps them motivated to continue advocating for their students and their colleagues. “I remember that Joni Mitchell song, ‘You don't know what you've got till it's gone.’ We don't want to get to that point here,” concludes Dan.

Angela Bina is a music teacher in Spokane who moved here from Wisconsin. She was surprised by the relief she felt when, at a new educator meeting at SEA, she realized the guarantees her contract provided. She had previously worked in Wisconsin where they lost things like paid prep time and class size guarantees. “It's worth it. You are worth the fight to guarantee your salary, prep time and the other things that make your work environment tolerable.

“Stick with it. Stick with each other,” she says. “Join your union and never look back.”

It's ironic that this court case is named Janus, like the Roman god of transitions. Whether it marks a beginning or an ending, we can't control the Court's decision. As we look to the future, one person at a time, we can join together to make positive changes for our students, our schools and ourselves. Isn't that why we do this work in the first place?

With very few options to cut back on work, Centerville’s teachers decided the only solution was to ask for additional hours of pay. So last spring, they outlined their reasoning at the bargaining table.

“Our proposal was 150 hours at per diem,” recalls Lucy Rinehart, the first- and second-grade teacher, and the teachers’ local president. “When we as a union were respectfully declined, we looked at other ways of doing that. . . . We didn’t give up. And we worked toward something that we were all in agreement with.



Lucy Rinehart

“We ended up with 140 hours the first year, 160 the following year, and then 180 the third year of the contract.”

That’s 18 additional days of pay in year 1, or 10 percent of the school year, 20.6 days in year 2, and 23 days in year 3. The school day, at 7.75 hours, is now officially 15 minutes shorter than before, and teachers have one more paid day to prepare for school, bringing the total additional paid time by the third year from 3 days to more than 27 days annually.

Third-fourth grade teacher Jody Daniels said part of the success of winning more paid hours than were initially requested was setting a fixed hourly rate and then phasing in the increases over time.

“I don’t think that the board didn’t appreciate us and didn’t appreciate our time — it was never that — I think that the issue was that they couldn’t plan financially,” Daniels says, “until they knew how much to expect for each year.”

Centerville’s support staff are still locked in negotiations as of late December. Key issues



New contract settlements continue to boost wages across Washington. Bargaining this year has trickled into the winter because of the Legislature’s delayed action this past spring on the McCleary school funding lawsuit. Recent victories included teachers in Royal, above, who had lagged 19 percent below the state’s average pay, winning a 5 percent increase in addition to the state COLA for inflation.

include increasing pay, and equalizing pay between jobs. It’s a philosophic point, but also the reality when job duties overlap in the small school.

“It’s important that everybody goes up (in pay) but it’s also important whose job is valued more, and so we think everybody is valued the same, job-wise,” says Karie Rolfe, president and paraeducator. “Let’s try just a base wage for everybody, and then, based on seniority, go up.”

The common thread is that it doesn’t take a big union to move contracts forward.

“If we can do it in Centerville, everyone can stand up for themselves,” Daniels says. “There’s only five of us, and we accomplished a pretty large task that was set forth in front of us in a fairly small amount of time with some assistance from the WEA. But we accomplished it by working together, and by sticking to our guns.”

we2.0

Washington Education Association



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Union Trivia

-  How well
-  do you
-  know your
-  Washington
-  Education
-  Association?

Whether you're a first-year educator or a longtime member of the WEA family, put your union knowledge to the test. If you're stumped, ask your colleagues for help. Read previous issues of *We2.0* or visit our website at www.WashingtonEA.org. And, you might find a few answers in this issue, too.

Clip out and submit your answers to WEA, P.O. Box 9100, Federal Way, WA 98001, Attn: We2.0 Union Trivia.

All entries must be received by Jan. 30, 2018. The names of those who answer all 13 questions correctly will go in to a pool and we'll randomly draw three winners. Three lucky members get to select a WEA fleece jacket, vest OR sweatshirt, so be sure to include your full name, local, non-school email and cell phone number.

Name: _____

Local: _____

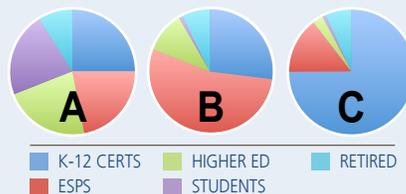
Non-work email: _____

Cell phone: _____

Address: _____

Q: How many members are in the Washington Education Association?

Q: Which percentage of WEA members are K-12 certs, ESPs, higher education, students, and retired (as of January 2017)? A, B, or C? _____



Q: What was the first WEA local to go on strike?

Q: What year did WEA delegates at RA vote to form a coalition to sue the state for failing to meet its constitutional duty to amply fund public education?

Q: In 1998 WEA created and developed Sparks as an experiential school for newer members to spark interest and engage with members who have little or no union experience. Sparks develop skills they can use in their class, at their school and in their education association. The program has been offered and replicated nationally and has taken on different iterations including Polisparks. True or False.

Q: In 2012 the state Supreme Court ordered the state to raise education spending. When is the deadline for the state to approve a state funding plan that amply funds basic education?

Q: Which four-year institution in Washington was the first to negotiate a collective bargaining agreement?

Q: WEA is considered the leader in the nation in terms of providing National Board support and serves as the national training hub for new Jump Start sites. True or False.

Q: Bargaining hard wasn't an isolated occurrence this year. A significant number of locals achieved the statewide bargaining goal. How many locals negotiated COLA plus 5 percent or more for the 2017-18 school year so far?

Q: Which local offers the highest Time, Responsibility and Incentives (TRI) pay at the maximum salary with a master's degree?

Q: Washington has the fourth most NBCTs in the nation. True or False.

Q: When does the 2018 Regular Session of the Washington State Legislature convene?

Q: In 2017, which local negotiated the highest salary percentage that is uniform (regardless where you are on the salary schedule) for its members?

Good luck!