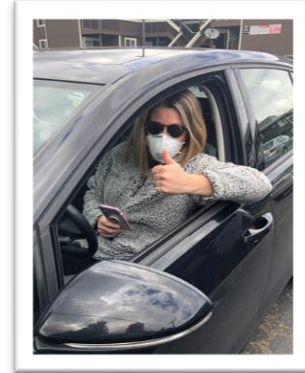
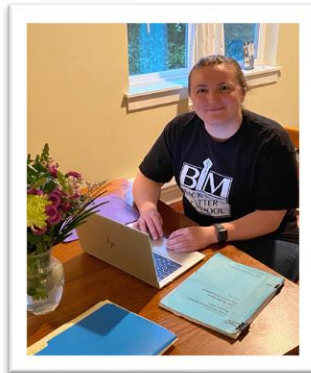




Update - Stay Connected

April 24, 2020



Pressure washing to relax. Answer member emails. Delivering meals to students.

Our first week of distance learning is behind us! By now we have all discovered that working from home presents more than a few challenges.

We set up our laptop outside to accommodate our spouse, partner, roommate, son or daughter who needs the only office space available. Just then, the neighbor decides to mow their lawn as our meeting begins. The dog barks before we can mute the mic; we forget to unmute when it's our turn to speak. Moreover, the workload does not respect evenings or weekends. Email is the gift that just keeps on giving. Boundaries between home and work are non-existent. I suspect that description fits all of us. It is certainly true for me. Please grant yourself moments of grace and time to rest. I am certain without a doubt that each one of the 2083 LWEA members deserves it.

On the upside, I have been fortunate to collaborate with our ESA, TOSA, Counselor, and SpEd specialists to identify and address challenges they face as a result of our evolving working conditions. Although their working conditions are very different, they share a similar vision for reaching and supporting families and students. The volume of information and policy changes can feel like a rushing tide, but it is very grounding to work with and support passionate educators as they sort out new working and learning conditions. In coming weeks, that work will continue with other specialist groups. We also held another successful Rep Assembly this week. Over 120 reps joined us for our second tele-RA. I am humbled to work with educators who go above and beyond to represent their staff.

Like many of you, I have also found myself taking pleasure (and finding sanity) in household projects for which I previously never found time. Anything for a little time outdoors. Pressure washing can be surprisingly therapeutic!

Be well and please find some time for yourself,

Howard Mawhinney

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This Could Be Your Last Update!

ANYONE can receive the Update – it is not just for certificated/LWEA members. Any classified, retired, substitutes, or other district personnel who want to continue receiving the Update needs to complete the Google Form.

[Update Email Google Form](#)

Our goal is to move all Update communications to home email and/or text by May 1, 2020. After May 1, you can find/receive the Update on the LWEA website, on your home email or by text.

- Receive the Update by text, join text line by texting: **LWEAINFO to 414-11**
- To receive the Update on your home email you MUST complete the google doc form. All current distribution lists will be deleted. Complete the Home Email google doc now. [Update Email Google Form](#)

Dependent Care Assistance Program (DCAP) Election Changes Due to COVID-19

In light of school closures, day care disruptions, and general-purpose day camp closures this summer due to the COVID-19 state of emergency, many people are wondering whether they can change their 2020 DCAP elections. If costs for dependent or elder care have changed, that change creates something called a special open enrollment (SOE). The employee has 60 days from the date of the cost change to increase or decrease their annual election.

The change must be consistent with the event that creates the SOE. For example, if costs decrease because someone's day care closed, the person can only decrease their election. Likewise, if the employee was forced to switch to a more expensive facility because their regular daycare was closed, they can only increase their election. Keep in mind that employees decreasing their elections can only lower the annual contribution to the amount they have already contributed so far this year.

To make the change, the employee must submit the [SEBB Change in Status form](#) to their employer along with proof of the cost change.

Employees can change their Medical FSA elections only if they experience an SOE event that allows this change. Those events are more limited than the dependent care options, however.

Pandemic Unemployment Insurance Now Available

Substitutes, ESPs, or part-time faculty who may need to access unemployment insurance but did not have enough work history to access regular unemployment insurance can now apply for the pandemic unemployment assistance, which can be back dated to Feb. 2.

Due to high demand stressing the system, potential applicants may want to consider applying at off-hours, and avoid Sundays, when a high number of users are submitting their weekly claims.

Applicants need to fill out regular Unemployment Insurance first and then add the application for the Pandemic Unemployment Insurance. There are [webinars](#) that people can review before navigating the system. Here is how to create a [SAW account](#).

LWEA Office

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LWHS / 425-936-1700

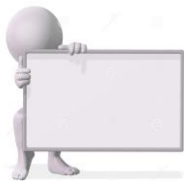
Special Services Rep:

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Rush / 425-936-2690

Ethnic Minority Rep:

Maryziel Galarpe
Blackwell / 425-936-2520

**LWEA -
this is your union!**



Smart Health Videos and Trainings Promote Wellness

Join [Smart Health](#), an online tool that offers free videos and trainings and more. It's free and part of school employees' SEBB benefits. You can qualify for a \$125 wellness incentive by reaching a total of 2,000 points in SmartHealth by Nov. 30.

Sign up for the next Workplace Wellness Academy online

The [Workplace Wellness Academy](#) is a free online course for Washington school employees to help increase their well-being at work and in life. Generation Wellness and SmartHealth have partnered to offer this online course free of charge to the first 600 Washington school employees participating in SEBB to sign up. Two free OSPI clock hours and 300 SmartHealth bonus points are available upon completion of course by April 30. This course will reopen May 1 for an additional 600 participants so [join the waitlist](#).

Words of Encouragement from Larry Delaney, WEA President

"None of this is easy. All of us want answers and schedules and certainty. There is none. All we can do is wake up five days a week and do the best we can to support ourselves, our families and our students. We can keep ourselves in balance and find ways to stay sane and stay healthy.

Remember to connect with one another. Compassion is more important than ever.
Letting go of some things is really okay."



Marketplace

Ads are run in the Update on a first come, first served basis. All ads must include a home email and/or phone number. Send directly to [Terri Neely](mailto:Terri.Neely@lwea.org) in the LWEA office.

All ads are subject to the approval of the LWEA Executive Committee and may be edited for length.



Thru End of Year
Work from Home

April 29
Exec Committee
Check-In Mtg

May 5
Exec Committee Mtg

May 10
Mother's Day



Looking for Info from LWEA about COVID-19? We have you covered.

Have you been looking for the most recent information on LWEA's work on COVID-19? Click this link for the latest FAQ's on working conditions and information. [LWEA Covid 19 Info](#)

Also- if you are an LWEA member- please join our textline! Text LWEAInfo to 41411.

LWEA Members Are Taking Care of Their Communities

LWEA educators have been busy during the closure: preparing remote learning, honoring seniors, sending encouragement, balancing home and work, preparing food assistance. Tell us how you've been helping students stay connected.



Take a break.
You deserve it!

