



WE...too

Washington Education
Association – Retired

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Change in the ‘charter’ concept

by Ken Mortland, WEA Republican
Educators Caucus, WEA-Retired
Vice President

Charter schools were proposed as a format for addressing the needs of students who were not doing well in the traditional school system. The idea was to focus resources on a target population of special needs students. However, even during the early years of charter schools, there were those who had other agendas. For example, in a legislative district meeting of precinct committee persons, the concept expressed by several and unchallenged by the rest was that charter schools were stepping stones to a voucher system, and charters had to be commonplace before a voucher program could succeed. No mention of charters *improving* our educational institutions — merely being a way

station on the routine to vouchers. These were parents with kids already in private schools, who were looking for ways to get the state to reimburse them for their children’s private school tuition costs.

Today, the focus has changed: the concept is on charter schools as investment opportunities. Many charter schools are run by non-profits, but they are allowed to contract with anyone to obtain the facilities and services necessary; there is the opportunity for profit. Many charter schools don’t use a non-profit façade, but are outright profit-oriented companies. And these are very good investment opportunities.

David Brain, CEO of Entertainment Properties Trust, describes the charter schools market as a very stable,

recession-resistant business with a very high demand product in an industry that is growing by 12-14% a year, and is supported by public revenues with bipartisan support. As such, it is a moderate risk and a recommended investment in today’s market.

There is no pretense of concern about improving education or providing parents with choices. This is purely a business proposition. That is something we should keep in mind when we hear charter school proposed in flowery terms of empowering parents, improving educational opportunity, etc. What is the fundamental concept of a charter school?

WEA opposes Initiative 1240, the Charter School Initiative, and recommends a “no” vote on this measure in November.

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President's Message

Republican voices

Unless you've been totally holed up in some cave with no access to newspapers, TV or the internet, you probably haven't been able to escape the fact that there is a huge election this November. We've mentioned politics in past issues of this newsletter and you'll find more in this issue. I personally think that what is at stake is too important to ignore. Not everyone agrees with



Kit Raney, WEA-Retired president

what we publish, and after our last issue we received a letter upset with us for urging members to vote for the "Obama liberal ticket."

Personally I support full-funding for public schools and that every child is entitled to a free public education. I also support the right to collectively

bargain, the separation of church and state, strengthening Social Security, and health care for all. No one in our great country should go hungry. Paying taxes is important. As Oliver Wendell Holmes said, taxes "buy civilization." And if one earns more, one should pay more taxes. I am against vouchers, charter schools and tying evaluations to test scores.

Today that makes me a liberal and I will be proudly voting to re-elect President Obama and voting for Jay Inslee for Governor.

Let's look at what some famous Republicans have to say about my "liberal" beliefs:

- "Where free unions and collective bargaining are forbidden, freedom is lost." ~ Ronald Reagan
- "Only a fool would try to deprive working men and working women of their right to join the union of their choice." ~ Dwight D. Eisenhower
- "Labor is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labor, and could never

have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration." ~ Abraham Lincoln

- "We establish no religion in this country. We command no worship. We mandate no belief, nor will we ever. Church and state are and must remain separate." ~ Ronald Reagan
- "Today's so-called 'conservatives' don't even know what the word means. They think I've turned liberal because I believe a woman has a right to an abortion. That's a decision that's up to the pregnant woman, not up to the pope or some do-gooders or the Religious Right. It's not a conservative issue at all." ~ Barry Goldwater
- "I believe that there should be a very much heavier progressive tax on very large incomes, a tax which should increase in a very marked fashion for the gigantic incomes." ~ Theodore Roosevelt
- "Should any political party attempt to abolish social security, unemployment insurance, and eliminate labor laws and farm programs, you would not hear of that party again in our political history. There is a tiny splinter group, of course, that believes that you can do these things. Among them are a few Texas oil millionaires, and an occasional politician or businessman from other areas. Their number is negligible and they are stupid." ~ Dwight D. Eisenhower

And from just one Democrat:

- "The liberty of a democracy is not safe if the people tolerate the growth of private power to a point where it becomes stronger than their democratic state itself. That, in its essence, is fascism – ownership of government by an individual, by a group." ~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

Maybe I'm naïve but I'd like to think that these Republicans of old would have a very hard time voting for candidates who would eliminate the right to collectively bargain, who want to privatize public schools and Social Security, who do not support the Affordable Care Act and who support tax cuts for the very wealthiest. Maybe they wouldn't even think that I'm a liberal.

Nominations

WEA-Retired Delegate Nomination Form for the 2013 WEA-RA

WEA Representative Assembly will be held in Bellevue, WA, April 25-27, 2013.

- Nominees for WEA-Retired Delegate must be retired and not hold a contract with a public school district.
- Nomination forms must be postmarked by **November 15, 2012**.
- Nominees must agree to attend all sessions.
- All nominations must have the consent of the nominee. **Self-nomination is acceptable.**
- Delegates are elected annually to serve one year.
- Biography of 50 words or less is optional and will be used only if a run-off election is necessary.

I nominate the following RETIRED member to be a delegate to the 2013 WEA Representative Assembly:

Name _____ Address _____

City/State/Zip _____ Phone (_____) _____

E-mail Address if available _____

UniServ Council: _____ Soc. Sec. or ID# _____
(Soc. Sec. number or ID number listed on your membership card are needed by WEA for verification of membership)

Retirement Month _____ Year _____

DELEGATE FUNDING

WEA-Retired Board of Directors approved a policy June 9, 2010, regarding the funding of delegates to the WEA Representative Assembly. In accord with that policy, WEA-Retired leadership has determined that WEA-Retired can afford to fully fund 20 delegates to the WEA Representative Assembly. If there are more than 20 nominees, then delegates will have some out-of-pocket expenses.

Please check one of the following statements:

____ I understand I could have some out-of-pocket expenses and I am willing to cover those expenses.

____ I understand I could have some out-of-pocket expenses and I would prefer my name be removed if that is the case.

Return WEA Representative Assembly Nomination Forms to:

Jan Curtis
718 Russell Road
Snohomish, WA 98290-5617

Deadline: Forms must be postmarked no later than **November 15, 2012**.

Election Day

Recommendations

Compiled by Kit Raney
WEA-Retired President

WEA-PAC, the political action committee of WEA, makes endorsements for candidate and ballot issues within our state. For candidates, the process begins with the completion of a questionnaire, followed by a formal interview conducted by local educators within that legislative district. For statewide offices, the interview is conducted by the WEA-PAC Board of Directors.



Candidates for federal offices also complete a questionnaire, and are interviewed by local educators. Recommendations are taken to the WEA Board of Directors and then sent to the NEA Board of Directors for final approval. The endorsement of President Obama was overwhelmingly approved by the over 9,000 delegates to the 2011 NEA Representative Assembly.

You will be getting information from WEA on our recommendations, but here are some of the key races. To view detailed information about a specific candidate or ballot measure, go to www.ourvoicewashingtonnea.org and mouse over the tab “2012 ELECTION RECOMMENDATIONS” in the top menu bar for a drop-down list of all recommendations. You will also be able to view the answers to WEA-PAC candidate questionnaires on those pages.

The National Education Association Fund for Children and Public Education endorsed:

President of the United States of America

— Barack Obama (D)

President Obama has made education funding his highest domestic priority, opposes school vouchers, and has consistently promoted affordable access to higher education for all students. He fully supports workers’ rights to form unions, opposes so-called “right-to-work” legislation, and is committed to protecting and strengthening Social Security.

United States Senate — Maria Cantwell (D)

U.S. House of Representatives —

CD 1: Suzan DelBene (D)

CD 2: Rick Larsen (D)

CD 6: Derek Kilmer (D)

CD 7: Jim McDermott (D)

CD 8: Dave Reichert (R)

CD 9: Adam Smith (D)

CD 10: Denny Heck (D)

WEA Board endorsed the following positions on **Ballot Measures**:

Referendum 74 (marriage equality): YES

Initiative 1185 (Tim Eyman’s latest, regarding supermajority requirement to pass taxes): NO

Initiative 1240 (charter schools): NO

The WEA Board opposes

continued on page 5

Recommendations, continued

Initiative 1240, which would create a new system of publicly funded private charter schools. There are many reasons Washington voters have rejected charter schools three times:

- 1) charters don't work for most kids;
- 2) they siphon money from our existing public schools, and
- 3) they have little accountability to taxpayers.

Wealthy Seattle-area businesspeople are funding the campaign and funded paid signature gatherers.

WEA-PAC endorsed candidates for **statewide offices**:

Governor — Jay Inslee (D)

“We must stop underfunding our schools. The past two legislative sessions have been very difficult for our entire educational system and now the legislature is grappling with yet another \$2 billion shortfall. Clearly, cuts are no longer an option for education.”

— Jay Inslee

Attorney General: Bob Ferguson (D)

Commissioner of Public Lands:

Peter Goldmark (D)

Insurance Commissioner:

Mike Kreidler (D)

Secretary of State: Kim Wyman (R)

State Treasurer: Jim McIntire (D)

State Auditor: Troy Kelley (D)

Superintendent of Public Instruction:

Randy Dorn (D)

WEA-PAC endorsed candidates for **Washington State Supreme Court**:

Position 2: Susan Owens

Position 8: Steven Gonzalez

Position 9: Sheryl McCloud

WEA-PAC endorsed candidates for State Legislature are listed at

www.ourvoicewashington.org. And remember, to view detailed information about a specific candidate, including answers to WEA-PAC candidate questionnaires, go to www.ourvoicewashington.org.

If you are registered to vote but missed the deadline to update your address, you can still vote. Contact your county elections department where you are currently registered to request a ballot.

Contact Information for WEA-Retired

E-mail:

WEARetired@washingtonea.org or raneyk@aol.com

Website:

www.washingtonea.org/retired

Mailing address:

P.O. Box 9100

Federal Way, Wa 98063-9100

Update

Current litigation

by Kit Raney,
WEA-Retired President

WEA and WEA-Retired are part of two lawsuits against the State of Washington. To refresh your memory, the first lawsuit is to reinstate gain-sharing. Gain-sharing for members of Plan 1 and Plan 3 was repealed by the Legislature in 2007. As part of this legislative action, they replaced the gain-sharing provision with Early Reduction Retirement Factors (ERRFs) for Plan 2 and Plan 3 members. This lawsuit was divided into two parts — whether the State could eliminate gain-sharing and whether, if gain-sharing was reinstated, the ERRFs could be eliminated.

This case was heard by King County Superior Court Judge Richard Eadie. He ruled in favor of reinstating gain-sharing and also ruled that, if gain-sharing was reinstated, the State could eliminate the ERRFs. This case has been appealed to the State Supreme Court.

Until all appeals are complete, eligible Plan 2 and Plan 3 members can access the ERRFs. There is also an injunction in place which requires the State to pay out gain-sharing if a gain-sharing event should occur.

In June of 2011, the Legislature repealed the Uniform COLA for Plan 1 members. WEA and WEA-Retired are also part of this litigation. The Uniform COLA lawsuit is a class action suit with two WEA-Retired members, Kit Raney and Stacia Bilsland, listed as plaintiffs. Depositions are currently being taken with Kit's deposition taken on September 24. As this goes to press, Stacia's deposition has not yet been scheduled. This case is assigned to Thurston County Superior Court Judge Wickham and should be heard in early 2013.

Providing information

by Karle Warren, WEA-Retired Board

WEA Retired recently brought information to WEA members at the Pasco School District #1 Vendor Expo on August 27th at Pasco High School. Pasco Association of Educators President, Joy Reilly, extended the invitation to us.

Members Karle Warren and Linda Mortland (pictured) greeted members at the WEA-Retired table. They distributed information about WEA-Retired membership, resources and pre-retirement seminars. And of course red licorice!

Linda and Karle talked with a large range of employees — from those with little experience in public education to some within a year of retiring.

Both ladies left happy with the experience and look forward to next year. Hopefully their voices will have recovered too!



Linda Mortland, left, and Karle Warren (WEA-Retired Executive Board) shared information at the Pasco Vendor Expo in August.

Farewell to several WEA-Retired leaders

An organization like WEA-Retired can only function when it has active members and outstanding leaders willing to give their time, energy and expertise. This year the WEA-Retired family has lost four such people.

Steve Tellari served as Board Director for Kent for many years. From 2003 to 2005 Steve was the Editor of the WEA-Retired newsletter. During his tenure, the newsletter took on a new name and a new look. The result was “We...too” receiving awards in 2003 and 2004 from NEA-Retired for an established newsletter. Steve also served for many years on the WEA Documents and Resolutions Committee.



For several years **Shirley Painter**, a retired ESP member, served as the Board Director for Seattle and as a member of the WEA-Retired Executive Committee. She was a mainstay on the WEA-Retired Internal Audit Committee for more than 10 years until illness prevented her participation. It was Shirley’s voice that reminded us WEA-Retired represented all public education retirees, not just teachers.

Wayne Eirish was in his first term as Board Director for WEA Chinook Retired. After retiring Wayne established an embroidery business providing us with bags with “WEA-Retired” embroidered in the color of choice and donating bags to the Dollars for Scholars auction.

And in September, **Judy Wooten** passed away while in Federal Way for a WEA-Retired training. Judy had served as Board Director for WEA-Eastern Washington and as a member of the WEA-Retired Executive Committee. From 2010 to 2012 Judy was the WEA-Retired Vice President. She was one of the driving forces behind bringing WEA-Retired pre-retirement seminars to active members of WEA-Eastern Washington and Spokane UniServs. Judy also helped at countless WEA and NEA Rep Assemblies as a member of the Convention Work Teams.

All four of these dedicated leaders will be missed.

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Perspective, a request

Retirement! Either a time of ease, or a time of renewed passion – or both! What have you learned from the weeks, months, or years since you left the classroom? Over coffee in the morning, do you and your friends solve the problems of contemporary education? Let us know! Have you found a book that makes you laugh out loud? Review it for us! Have you found a destination or an activity or an unexpected byway? C’mon now ... please share. Submit your article or idea to WEARetired@washingtonea.org or raneyk@aol.com or njcmiller@hotmail.com.

We need your help!



WEA-Retired Newsletter
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**REMEMBER
TO VOTE!
ELECTION DAY
IS TUESDAY
NOV. 6**

The only retired organization affiliated with WEA and NEA

