

November 9, 2023

Hi REA!

Rather than solely sending out another too long email, I hope this video allows you to absorb some updates from our union without taking time away from your work and life! Here we go!

Click on the image or here:

https://youtu.be/kyXsWJqJkMQ?si=fBdcM1U9D_IVjVvp



***NOTE THAT I FAILED IN THE VIDEO TO INCLUDE AN UPDATE ABOUT ONE IMPORTANT SCHOOL BOARD RACE THAT WAS DECIDED ON TUESDAY. Susan Talley is also our new school board director. I didn't have time to re-record the video today and wanted to get this out to you all before my evening meetings. Apologies! More information on Susan Talley is below.**

Restorative Justice At Last!

REGISTER HERE FOR THIS SUNDAY

- Each day I am doing all I can to help Members in conflict, members struggling with student needs that are beyond what school can address, members depressed and hurting about the world beyond our schools, and of course, burnout.
- I am so hopeful to fill the 25 spots saved for our Restorative Justice Circle this Sunday at the brand new Hilltop Heritage Elementary school Library! If you didn't get the invitation flyer in your home email last night, please email me or your building rep. [Here's the Registration Link again.](#)
 - This Sunday's Circle has a broad focus on justice and healing. It is being promoted very late and for that I am sorry. It initially was planned with a tight focus on the Houston Family justice project and our school board attend to open dialog on the ongoing requests for recognition and reparation to the loss of the Houston family farm in 1968.
 - Because we were told board directors have been advised by legal counsel to not engage in discussions related to reparations, we switched up the topic to address urgent needs of our members.
- No matter our politics, we are union siblings and in these times we can be a support to each other just by showing up to listen and speak from the heart. Every circle is different but all can be transformative and this one is intended to be healing for all participants.

- I'll bring some of my favorite restorative practices resources for you to peruse and potentially bring this approach to your work or home life, if you find it as powerful as many of us do.

Electoral Politics

- If you've joined WEA PAC you should have received an update that tomorrow we are interviewing and debating an endorsement for governor. I'm attending the all day event as one of three leaders in Rainier UniServ Council.
 - WE STILL NEED A MEMBER TO STEP UP and learn how to support political action in REA. You don't need political experience to serve in this role. If you're interested our first activity is to help plan the At-Home Legislative meeting sponsored by the Rainier UniServ Council in December. We are going to be talking with the legislators from the 11th and 33rd districts as these are the lawmakers assigned to our council that we lobby each year on education issues. This is a really fun event as it lets us see these people as HUMANS and we are very lucky to have staunch supporters of public education, union rights and justice supporting us.
 - It was because we didn't have any member able to support an endorsement process for Renton City Council or school board (even though there wasn't a truly contested race on the ballot) in the lead up to Tuesday's election. We do sometimes work with MLK Labor Council on endorsement processes but this year we just relied on their voter recommendations. I hope this is not the case next year! Local politics matter!
- So.... who is going to be our school board for the rest of this year? I'm glad you asked!
 - Pam Teal, a board member for many years who resigned a few year back, IS BACK and was appointed in October to fill the rest of Director Shelby Scovel's term who resigned in August.
 - Justin Booker was elected on Tuesday to his first full term following his appointment to complete the term of Gloria Hodge who resigned in January. He is an assistant principal himself and is married to an assistant principal of one of our elementary school's and has kids in our schools.
 - Dr. Stephanie McIrvine and Dr. Avanti Bergquist will continue on until their next term is up for election. Both also have students in our schools.
 - There is a new school board member coming on board, her name is Susan Talley and she is an office manager at an elementary school and member of Seattle Education Association. We reached out to her a few times last spring but she declined to participate in our endorsement process; that was when she had an opponent who dropped out of the race over the summer. Susan is a relative of past school board director Al Talley and is a cousin of our superintendent, Dr. Pattenau.

School Board Topics of Interest

- Last night at the school board meeting I was the only REA member in attendance at KEC, where most meetings are held from now on.
 - They have decided to not allow comments made by the public on zoom.
 - A lengthy presentation [\(linked here\)](#) was given by the chiefs of schools and I have many questions about the data. Please take a look at it and if you too have questions, let's ask them together! You can always email your thoughts to the board at board.public.comment@rentonschools.us
 - Last month the Board passed a motion to buy 33 homes and 8 businesses to expand the footprint of and rebuild Renton High School. Through conversations with Damien last week I learned there are new federal regulations that require some support for relocation of families when an entity like a school district forcibly buys their land and home. More to come on this but as we learn more about that I hope we might possibly use it to support next steps with justice for the Houston family.

- Building reps are signing up to attend at least one school board meeting this year. Please consider making it a group event and join them! I'd love to meet up with any of you before the meeting to talk about the agenda and how we think or feel about what they are doing.
- We have a binder for any/all members to add their thoughts and observations. We can share this insight at rep council or, if we get a political action chair, there could be more options to disseminate school board activities.

Ongoing Work for Racial Justice

- There is hopeful work being done on the newly consolidated DEI Committee and I know they are looking forward to sharing with you all soon what direction we, as a district, are headed when it comes to retention of educators of color.
 - Whether you are a new or veteran educator, please consider a new opportunity for affinity group work that is [described on this image](#)-it was intended for newer educators but ALL are welcome! It will be held at Talley High School Dec 12, Feb 27 & May 21. Seven clock hours are available. Register here: https://linktr.ee/rsd_berc
 - REA's Racial and Social Justice Committee is seeking members to join up and plan for union sponsored actions centered on equity and liberation for all. Email me if you want more info!

War and Trauma.... What Can We Do?

- As a union we can take positions on issues and events that do not directly pertain to our work. At Monday's REA Rep Council meeting reps began to discuss what the Israel/Hamas/Palestine war means to our members.
 - A motion to release a statement about this issue was referred to REA's executive board and we are meeting THIS MONDAY to discuss how to do this in a meaningful way that doesn't cause harm or further trauma to our members or students who have personal connections with people in the region OR who have strong viewpoints and values about the current crisis and military actions. I say all this because there are some updated NEA resources to help YOU, as educators, talk about this with students and others in your life. [Here is the website](#) with lots of tools to explore. Check out the [EdWeek article linked here](#).
 - Regardless of our personal views, REA is committed to supporting members work through conflict they may have people who feel very differently and who bring what feels like an oppositional view to these complicated and tragic events. We are exploring new ways to mediate and, like on Sunday, help each other heal together through restorative practices.
 - Don't forget that we have access to FREE counseling services through Canopy. And our students can access Hazel Health and/or Talk Space.

Union Attacks & Educated Responses

- We know there are forces in this world who don't believe in our work as unionized educators. [Here are some ways to frame the issue](#) that anti-union organizations might send to union members like you.
 - If you receive a postcard or email from one of these groups, please let us know by emailing asutliff@washingtonea.org and me @ julianna.dauble@washingtonea.org so we can report it to WEA who follows these coordinated attacks on our rights to a collective voice.

REA Building Meetings

- Please attend your meetings when you can: lost more info on the day to day working of our union and your school are shared in those spaces. YOUR CONCERNS are brought directly to your reps at these meetings and we are working closely with RSD leaders to build transparency around those monthly labor management meetings your REA reps attend on your behalf. The union can't enforce the contract, mitigate unnecessary workload, improve safety or help you personally unless you speak up!

Reach out with questions and I hope to see many of you on Sunday at 1:00 at the beautiful new Hilltop Heritage Elementary School for a nervous-system reset and healing experience.

Solidarity, my union siblings.

JULIANNA K. DAUBLE (SHE/HER)

President, Renton Education Association (REA)

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