

# OEA Speaks

## OLYMPIA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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### President's Corner – June 2019

It is odd to be writing my final President's Corner. In many respects my time as the OEA president has gone by quickly, although the last month has been moving glacially at best, probably for you as well. In this last write-up, I'll take the opportunity to "reflect on my professional practice". Thankfully there is no Danielson framework for a local president. One could imagine what it might look like...

As I've mentioned before, the opportunity to be your union president has been one of the largest growth opportunities I've experienced. I vividly remember my first Rep Council meeting as the new president. Nerves, lots of them. And I remember my 54<sup>th</sup> Rep Council meeting. That last meeting I ran in May was not held at the OEA office. We had outgrown that meeting space, and instead used the meeting room at the WEA-Chinook office in Tumwater. I had changed from that first rep council meeting (not so many nerves now), and our association had changed as well. We're larger, and we have many more people attending council meetings.

There is very little that doesn't change frequently in a school district, and over the last six years I sometimes felt like I was the only constant in a sea of change: Two superintendents, three Human Resources directors, ten different OEA exec board members, lots of building reps, untold number of financial and legislative changes, curricula changes, contract changes. Changes even took place within the union offices on State Ave. with two different Tumwater presidents and two

different North Thurston presidents. Suddenly I was the longest-tenured president in the building.

One constant I held on to in that sea of change was the purpose and goals of our union as stated in our Constitution and Bylaws.

*Purpose: The purpose of the Olympia Education Association shall be to advance the interests of the profession of teaching and to promote the cause of education in the Olympia School District and the State of Washington.*

*Goals: The Olympia Education Association shall be a member advocate association and shall develop and maintain Association strength and security in working towards the following goals:*

- *Goal 1: An independent, self-governing organization for members of the education profession with which all educators can identify.*
- *Goal 2: Guaranteed professional and economic rights and interests of members.*
- *Goal 3: Effective Association influence on public affairs and public opinion.*

In reflecting on our time together over the past six years, I would argue that we did admirable work fulfilling the purpose of our association. Our contract negotiations continually resulted in increased clarity and assurance about our work and our compensation in the OSD. Our lobbying efforts and actions at the local and state level did advance our profession and promote the cause of education: Initiative-1351 (class size reduction),



the McCleary lawsuit, de-linking standardized testing as a graduation requirement. We have seen billions of dollars in additional education funding allocated by the state legislature under our watch.

You helped with that effort. Whether you participated in a lobby day, showed up for a rally, walked out of your job to protest the legislature, or simply had a conversation with relatives about your work, you helped make it happen.

In reflecting on our goals, we have made progress as well.

Goal 1: Check. We continue to be self-governing, and we continue to flourish in spite of the Janus decision. Although some of the groundwork has been done for our association to be one in which *all educators can identify*, there is much more work that needs to happen. We need to increase participation of educators of color in our union and in our leadership positions.

Goal 2: Check. We are in a much better place economically and professionally than we were six years ago. We need to continue to stand strong, protect our gains, and work to achieve even more. Competitive, professional compensation must be paramount.

Goal 3: Check. We have influence in this community. Our teachers are well-respected, and our efforts to enact change have made a difference for ourselves, our families, and our students. That work needs to continue.

OEA is now in a time of transition. New leadership will bring new ideas, new enthusiasm, and new opportunities. Although I will no longer be in an official leadership position, I will still be available to help support Jodi Boe, our new OEA president, and the rest of the newly elected executive board. I have full faith and confidence in Jodi's ability to lead this organization and continue the great work we have done together. I hope you will be there to support her and the association as well.

It has been an honor to serve as your Olympia Education Association president.

Now go have fun!

Adam Brickell, President  
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## **Congratulations to our Retiring Teachers!**

The Olympia School District was far richer for the work of these ne educators. Congratulations on a career well done and have a great retirement!



Ed Bassett – Olympia High School  
Gordon Chamberlain – Olympia High School  
Catherine Crabb – Capital High School  
John Hitchman – Washington Middle School  
Christine Gendlek – Garfield Elementary School  
Hazel Gilley - ORLA  
Dan Lundberg – Capital High School  
Lorraine Manning – Olympia High School  
Dan McCartan – Lincoln Elementary School  
Tara Otonicar-Mock – Garfield Elementary School  
Marion Sheridan – Olympia High School  
Jeff Snyder – Pioneer Elementary School  
Kim Swanson – McLane Elementary School

## **2018-19 OEA Educator of the Year**

Dan Lundberg, Capital High School, was selected as the 2018-19 OEA Educator of the Year.

Dan's nominators had the following to say about him:

"Dan has taught approximately 6,000 student musicians over the last 41 years. He has emphasized that music is more than just a skill; it is a form of communication. A language that is about more than single sounds, instruments and notes – when combined as a group the result can lift you and move you to create something magnificent together and something to be proud of. Dan has always made the band room more than a lo-

cation. It is a 2<sup>nd</sup> home for many students and a place to positively connect, no matter what life is throwing at them as individuals.”



“Teaching an elective like band can be a unique challenge. Students aren’t required to pass and may drop the class at any time. This becomes a temptation especially for students with rigorous class loads, advancing testing

schedules, or other personal or academic reasons that challenge the practicality of pursuing a musical accolade. Mr. Lundberg takes these challenges in stride. By expecting the best from his students, they become eager to meet his standards. Students in his class are focused not just on personal achievement, but the success of their team.

Reading, writing, math and science are all important aspects of a high schoolers’ education. But as political developments and budgetary constrictions threaten the arts’ presence in schools across the country, I believe now more than ever it is important to recognize teachers who enrich students’ lives and academic careers through electives. The concept of a well-rounded student does not exist without teachers like Mr. Lundberg.”

“There are many reasons why this man deserves to be the OEA Teacher of the Year. First and foremost is his love for teaching students. I can’t speak for them, so I just went to them instead.

- He sacrifices his personal time and resources to help us be the best we can be. He is very passionate about his job and pours his heart into every piece he con-

ducts.

- Puts meaning behind the music we play. Brings joy and fun to the band room and the whole school.
- He inspires us to do our best.
- He works so hard to make it so that we have as many opportunities as possible.
- Believes in salt (in school lunches)”

“Dan also does a lot of little things for people, as a colleague, teacher, and friend. He actually shows up and mows the front lawn, for free, just because he takes pride in our building.”

## Capital City Pride Parade

The parade will be held on **Sunday, June 23, 2019**. Line-up will begin at 11:00 at the Capitol building. Look for the red and white OEA banner. The parade will begin at noon and conclude at Heritage Park. Family and friends of OEA members are welcome to walk with us.

## Dan McCartan receives Gary Brown Award

Dan McCartan, OEA Vice-President and SLP at Lincoln Elementary, was presented with the Gary Brown Award at the OSD Ice Cream Social.

This award is the highest honor that OEA can present to a member of the Organization. Gary Brown was a former WEA Chinook UniServ Council president and also a former president of the Olympia Education Association. Sadly, he passed away suddenly while out of state on union business in 2005. This award was created to keep his memory a constant presence in the Association.

The Gary Brown Award is given to those individuals who have put in exceptional time, energy, and action to support the mission and goals of the association.

It is given to members who exemplify what unionism is and what it can accomplish in the professional lives of its members and in the learning conditions of its students. The award was previously given to David Johnston, the former OEA president, in 2013.





Here are some comments I made at the Ice Cream Social about Dan:

*Dan has been an active member of the association since he began working in the Olympia school district decades*

*ago. He has been a building rep, a bargaining team member, a member of the OSD-OEA leadership team, a member at large on the OEA executive board, the OEA executive board secretary, and currently he serves as the OEA Vice President.*

*Throughout Dan's involvement with the association, he has worked to create relationships with both members of the union and members of the district administration. His ability to look at issues both logically and emotionally, to think out of the box, to take the perspective of others, and to be a constant source of advice and knowledge has helped advance the union and the school district in countless ways.*

*I have sent many draft emails to Dan and asked him "What do you think?" He often tells me that my wording could be more diplomatic. Every leader needs someone he or she can trust and confide in. Dan has been that person for me. Because of his good counsel, better decisions have been made. He has been a constant presence in this association, and it will be a loss to the union and the district when he retires.*

*However, because he has led by example, for those in the association who were paying attention to his words and actions, the association will continue to thrive with new leadership and new ideas.*

## Delink legislation

One of the positive outcomes from this past legislative session was the passing of a bill to delink passing the SBA as a high school graduation requirement. The Governor signed the bill into law on May 7<sup>th</sup>. Students will now have approximately eight different pathways to a diploma should they not pass the SBA or choose not to take it. WEA has been lobbying for this change based on member and community feedback, and issues of disproportionality in passing rates. For more information on the bill, go to the OurVoice section of the WEA website: [www.washingtonea.org](http://www.washingtonea.org).

## WEA Dues and OEA dues

At the April WEA Rep Assembly in Spokane, delegates voted for a change in how WEA dues are structured. With the significant increase in the average teacher salary over the last year, members faced a large spike in dues for the 2019-20 school year. WEA dues are based on the average teacher salary in the state. By a two-thirds vote approving a change in the multiplier, a large spike in dues was avoided. However, members will still see an increase in the amount of \$5.63 a month.

OEA faced a similar, potential spike in dues for the 2019-20 school year related to our increased salary schedule. At the May Rep Council meeting, the council approved an OEA bylaws language change to reduce the increase to .82 cents per month.

