

OEA Speaks

OLYMPIA EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

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President's Corner – October 2019

Greetings OEA members. Happy fall. OEA Speaks will arrive in your mailbox days before the Duck-Husky game. I am a Duck. You replaced one U of O graduate OEA president with another. This is the time of year when people are not nice to me. Some otherwise wonderful kind people at WMS would avoid me. My mother, a Husky, does not like me this week. I'll try to tone it down. I know I represent all of you. I am glad OEA elections are not in October. Go Ducks!



Hopefully your SEBB account is set up. If not you have until November 15th to set up your account. I found the process almost painless. If you are a two-teacher family, you both need SAW accounts and they must be on different emails. So I started by deleting an old SAW account and making two new ones on separate emails. Next I dug out my daughter's 20-year-old birth certificate and uploaded it. Once I had the birth certificate successfully uploaded I had to wait for it to get verified. When I checked back five days later it was verified and my daughter's name was on my account. Next step I attested "no" to the premium surcharges, neither my daughter nor I smoke, and my wife will have her own SEBB account so no spouse surcharge. Finally I chose my providers. The only call I had to make was to my dentist and they answered my question before I was done talking. I was given a satisfying document called "Summary of Coverage Elections". Then I started all over for my wife. If you



haven't done it, do it.

Jodi Boe, President
Olympia Education Association
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VEBA Results

Thank you all for participating in the VEBA vote. We received 288 votes (one school was invalid).

Should the Olympia School District offer VEBA to retirees, requiring that sick days be cashed out and placed in a VEBA account?

99.3% Yes 0.7% No

Should the Olympia School District offer VEBA to pre-retirees, requiring that all sick days over 180 in number, as well as personal leave days over 6 in number, be cashed out and placed in a VEBA account?

97.6% Yes 2.4% No

How to get involved in your union

by Caitlin Donnelly, Capital High School

Whether you're a new member or old, our union works best when we're involved. Here are some ways you can be active in OEA:

Attend building meetings

These 10-minute meetings will keep you updated on important information and upcoming events.

Talk to your building rep(s)

Build a relationship. Let them know how things are going for you.

Ensure the OEA office (360-352-5255) has your personal contact information
District resources can't be used for political purposes. Some communications have to go through private channels.



Attend a Rep Council meeting

You don't have to be a building rep. It's open to all members. :) But if you want to be a building rep, there will be a training on November 7th at WEA Chinook! Contact Jodi if you are not a building rep but would be interested in attending the training in order to learn more.

Utilize WEA Chinook resources and events

WEA Chinook offers trainings and clock hours, a Peer Support program, National Board support, and more.

Attend OEA/WEA events

Check your building's OEA bulletin board to see what's coming up.

Volunteer to be part of committees

For example, a committee to decide political endorsements, bargaining support team, etc. Contact Jodi Boe to see what committees have openings.

Join WEA-PAC

Politics inevitably and directly influences our working conditions and students' learning conditions. You can support WEA's efforts toward pro-public education candidates and policies for \$2.25/month. Contact your building rep to sign up.

Be an OEA delegate at the WEA or NEA Representative Assemblies

Every year, delegates representing local associations gather to decide the union's business for the following year. If you don't know parliamentary procedure now, you definitely will by the end. See how our state and national unions work from the bottom up, and feel empowered surrounded by educators working toward common goals.

Conferences and Curriculum Night

In September I got quite a few calls and emails regarding Curriculum Night and now I am getting some regarding Conferences. I realize Curriculum Night has come and gone, but the main question I got was do we have to go and the short answer is "no". Curriculum Night is not in the contract. Some felt it used to fall under the Optional Hours category, but we no longer have Optional Hours. That being said, I do feel that Curriculum Night is important. In a traditional school setting Curriculum Night is one of very few opportunities for parents to meet their students teachers and get a feel for their students day. There may be other ways to make that available to parents, which could be discussed at a building level. In the future, if your building decides to continue on with the




traditional Curriculum Night and you choose not to attend, I strongly encourage you to tell your supervisor as soon as possible.

Parent conferences are in the contract. Contract language states that you can get paid overload, one-hour curriculum rate for every conference over your stated overload. Buildings who do arena style conferences do not get overload. They are available to parents during certain time frames, not scheduled conferences. Arena style conferencing usually involves a lot of conferences but not at the depth of scheduled conferences. The contract also states you may go home after your last conference for the day even if that is prior to your regularly scheduled end time. However, members who don't have conferences or have very few conferences are expected to work their regular hours. The contract also states that teachers are not required to do evening conferences, but buildings may decide as a group to modify their schedule to include evening conferences in which case they can exchange like time from the original schedule.

The contract does not state how long conferences should be. I have heard from one elementary school that the upper classes have significantly larger classes than K/1. Buildings where that is the case, may consider having shorter conferences for the upper classes.

Washington Schools Receive 2019 Music and Arts Grant from California Casualty

Statewide September 2019 – 14 schools are getting a boost, thanks to a \$250 Music and Arts Grant from California Casualty. The grant will enable:

- Arcadia Elementary School (Deer Park) to provide Art Supplies and Lessons
- Brookdale Elementary School (Tacoma) for Classroom Art Projects
- Chattaroy Elementary (Chattaroy) for a Photography Art Program
- Chief Sealth International High School (Seattle) for Ceramics
- Covington Middle School (Vancouver) for the Choir Program
- DeLong Elementary (Tacoma) for the Recorder Music Program
- Evergreen High School (Seattle) for Marching Band
- Garfield Elementary (Yakima) for Visual Arts
- George T Daniel Elementary (Kent) for General Music
- Highland Middle School (Bellevue) for the PACIFIC Life Skills Special Education Program
-  **Julia Butler Hansen Elementary School (Olympia) for First Grade Art**
- Lincoln High School (Tacoma) for Drumsticks and Step Up Mouthpieces
- Shorecrest High School (Shoreline) to purchase Art Supplies for Autistic Students

- Westview Elementary (Spokane) for the Behavior Intervention Music Class

Washington schools are among 139 public schools in 31 states receiving a total of \$34,750 to provide materials, supplies and instruments for art, music and performance programs at the schools.

The grant is designed to foster creativity in schools, such as choir, band, dance, film, theater, computer arts and graphics, or any K-12 curriculum that employs art for learning.



Pictured from left to right: Erica Reich, California Casualty; Billy Harris, Principal; Jodi Boe, OEA President; Lindsay Johnston, Art Teacher; Cindy Johnson, 1st Grade Teacher.

Cindy Johnson, a first grade teacher, wrote the grant last spring and was rewarded with \$250. Cindy originally wanted to use the grant to buy an art curriculum called Deep Space Sparkle. This year, Hansen was one of the schools piloting the new Art, PE, Music rotation and the district bought the Deep Space Sparkle Curriculum so Cindy gave the money to Lindsay Johnston, the new art teacher. Lindsay will be using the money to buy art supplies.

California Casualty has partnered with the National Education Association since 2000 and understands the importance of music and arts education for children. Numerous studies have concluded that sharing a love of the arts enhances students':

- Brain development
- Creativity

- Classroom involvement

Music and art curriculum has also been shown to reduce disciplinary issues and dropout rates. Unfortunately, many schools have reduced or eliminated music and arts education because of budget cuts. California Casualty hopes to fill the need with the Music and Arts Grant. California Casualty hopes to fill the need with the Music and Arts Grant.

“Students love to showcase their creativity, and helping educators keep music and arts in the forefront of every-day learning is absolutely the right thing for us to do,” said California Casualty AVP Brian Goodman.

Washington public K-12 schools needing funding for an arts or performance program can apply for the 2020 Music and Arts Grant from California Casualty, at www.calcasmusicartsgrant.com.



November 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4 New Teacher Network 4-6pm	5	6 Exec Board 4:15pm OEA Office	7	8	9
10	11 Veteran's Day (No School)	12 School Board 6:30 Knox	13 Rep Council 4:15pm WEA-Chinook	14	15	16
17	18 Educators of Color Network 4-6pm	19	20	21	22	23
24	25 LGBTQ+ Network 4-6pm School Board 6:30 Lincoln	26	27 Thanksgiving Holiday (No School)	28 Thanksgiving (No School)	29 Thanksgiving Holiday (No School)	30

First Network Group Meetings

We have had our first two network groups at OEA this month. New educators and educators of color have met and LGBTQ+ will meet for the first time on Monday, October 21st. These groups all meet once a month. Your building rep should have postcards with the dates and we have them on the OEA Speaks calendar. Pizza is served at each meeting. The pizza is purchased with a grant from WEA Chinook and a discount from Vic's Pizza.



Contract Information Meeting

On Monday, October 28th Deb Haddon will be at the OEA office to explain or dive deep into the contract. If you have any contract questions or if you just want to learn more about our Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Olympia School District come to 1619 State Ave NE from 4:15-6pm.