

AEA Viewpoint

Newsletter of the Auburn Education Association
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Auburn School District Places Bond and Capital Levy before Voters

March 3, 2009

Volume 6, Issue 1

On March 10, 2009, the Auburn School District will place two propositions, a bond and a capital improvements levy, on the election ballot. The method in when the district receives funds from a capital levy and a bond issue are different and play a significant role in determining the projects included in each proposition.

Bond:

With the bond proposition, the district would receive funding upfront, which then would be paid off over the next twenty years. This is similar to a home mortgage, in which dollars are initially provided to purchase a home and is then repaid over a period of time.

By having the funding available at the start, the district can finance large multi-year construction projects. The 2009 bond proposition will fund three large projects which are the

replacement of Auburn High School, Olympic Middle School and Terminal Park Elementary School. Bonds are approved with a “super majority”. A super majority requires voter turnout of at least 40 percent of the turnout in the previous general election, and more than 60 percent of those voters must approve the proposition.

Capital Levy:

Capital levy funds are made available to the school district in smaller increments as taxes are collected twice per year. The district is not able to spend levy funds until the funds are collected. The smaller amounts of a capital levy typically restrict projects to smaller, short-term items such as upgrades to facilities, building system improvements, furniture and equipment upgrades.

The 2009 Capital Levy will fund improvements at eighteen schools and

six school district support facilities. These projects will reduce operating costs, improve health and safety, enhance learning opportunities, improve security and facility operations, support community use, and improve access for disabled persons. Funds would be collected over a six-year period and will allow completion of hundreds of improvements throughout the school district.

School levies pass when more than 50 percent of the voters approve the proposition. In November 2007, Washington voters approved an amendment to the state constitution which requires a “simple majority” for levies. Prior to this change, districts needed to have the 60 percent “super majority”. The 40 percent validation requirement was also removed from levies.

Inside this issue:

Bond and Capital Levy	1
News You Can Use	2
Member Benefits	3
Shared Sick Leave	3
AEA Ads	4

March

9	School Board
10	Remember to Vote!
13	Waiver Day
16	Rep Council
18	Bargaining Session with the Auburn School District & AEA
19	Bargaining Session with the Auburn School District & AEA



News You Can Use: Proposed Education Bills



Where did this legislation come from?

Two years ago, the Legislature commissioned a Basic Education Finance Task Force, which was charged with making recommendations to the Legislature on how to meet our state constitution's requirement to fully fund basic education. The task force was further charged with recommending a stable funding source for our schools. Last month, the report was turned into legislation that was introduced as House Bill 1410 and Senate Bill 5444.

I heard these bills were killed last week in Olympia due to efforts by WEA members. Is that true?

Yes—sort of killed. WEA members made over 25,000 legislative contacts regarding these bills. Although the bills appear to have been killed, several other replacement bills have been introduced. Most insiders in Olympia believe that there will be a number of attempts to incorporate aspects of HB 1410/SB5444 into other legislation. No one is sure which elements might be included and which might not.

Does the Basic Education Finance Task Force legislation have a funding source for public education?

No. The Task Force report, as well as the current legislation, **provides no system to fund our schools**, despite being charged to do so by the Legislature.

Is it really true that it's being proposed that master's degrees and credits will no longer count?

Yes, that's correct. Under the new salary schedule proposed in HB1410/5444, there would be three tiers—residency, professional, and master teacher. Beginning teachers would have 5 years to move from residency to professional by being successfully evaluated by state-certified teacher evaluators. If a teacher did not move to the professional level within 5 years, he/she would lose his/her certification permanently. Teachers could move to the third tier—master level—only if they attained National Board Certification.

Would student test scores be part of a teacher's evaluation?

Yes. The state plans to track student test scores by each individual teacher. In the original bills, those scores would be used to determine whether or not a teacher keeps his/her license.

Isn't peer evaluation against our contract?

Yes, that's correct. Under our contract, only administrators can evaluate teachers. As a result, our contracts would be in violation of the law. State law would prevail over our contract, since contracts can't be written that violate the law.

Will everyone have to go on the new salary schedule?

In the original legislation, new employees would be required to go on the new salary schedule starting in 2012. Existing employees would be able to choose between the current schedule and the new one—until 2022, that is. In 2022, all teachers would be moved to the new model.

So we're safe, then, if we're within 13 years of retirement, right?

Not necessarily. The legislation also bans extra compensation from local school districts which is not based on added hours on the job, such as our responsibility contract and incentive to attract and retain

Is there any evidence that such a salary structure would increase student achievement?

No—there is no credible research that shows that these types of models result in increased student achievement. In fact, the number of failures of so-called “pay-for-performance” structures is quite compelling.

Wouldn't peers be in the best position to help teachers improve?

Peer coaching can improve teacher performance and student achievement, but this salary model is not peer coaching. Peer coaching is most effective when done in a collaborative manner under the umbrella of professional development. When it becomes high stakes, such as when a teacher's certification and/or salary advancement is dependent upon the results, the positive effects of peer feedback are negated.

What can I do if I want to express my opinion to legislators?

The best way is to send an e-mail to your legislators by going to www.ourvoicewashingtonea.org. Be sure to use your home computer, since political activity is not allowed using district time or resources.

Go to: www.OurVoiceWashingtonEA.org

NEA Member Benefits

Financial resources in Tough Times



You can reduce the stress and cost of doing your taxes with discounted help from H&R Block. Download a discount coupon and save up to \$40 dollars on your in-person tax consultation at an H & R Block retail office or choose on-line tax filing and pay less than the standard cost. Get more information, including your coupon at neamb.com/taxcut08.

Our economy is going through tremendous challenges and NEA members are looking for help. NEA Member Benefits and the National Council for Credit Counseling have teamed up to provide debt management, budget credit repair and housing counseling to NEA members and their families. Go to www.debtadvice.org for more information and a variety of services.



Identity theft increased 20% in 2008. Everyone needs to protect against the various healthcare, tax, financial and criminal identity thefts that target you and even your children! NEA member benefits has selected Identity Fraud, Inc., to provide you and your family with excellent protection at a reasonable cost. Comprehensive Core Identity Protection starts at only \$19.95 and will cover any type of identity theft/fraud. Please visit www.neamb.com/idfraud for more information.

Did You Find It?



We have secretly placed the name of an AEA member within the pages of the Viewpoint.

If this is your name, you have won a \$5.00 gift card to Starbucks!~

To redeem your prize, contact AEA office manager, Kimberly Greene at office@auburnea.org or by phone at 253-804-6010

Shared Sick Leave



Check out this space for requests from your colleagues for shared sick leave.



Paulette Fonda, Cascade

James Hefflin, Dick Scobee

Michelle Ohashi, Dick Scobee

Chris Wilcox, Lakeview

If you have over 22 days of accumulated sick leave and would like to share extra days, please contact the office manager in your building for the shared sick leave form.

You may donate up to 6 days each year.

THE AEA MARKETPLACE

Your source for goods and services from our membership community

FOR SALE

A Simmons Natural Meridian Crib (Crib "N" More) originally bought from Babies 'r' Us (Model: 24818, Size: W 56, H 49, D 33). This is a solid wood crib with a 3-position mattress support that easily adjusts to fit a growing child. Converts from a 1) crib to a 2) toddler bed 3) day bed or love seat 4) full sized bed with headboard and footboard. (Day bed conversion kit included; full-size bed rails available separately. I believe you can buy the kit from Simmons' website. www.simmonskids.com.) Sale price includes crib and mattress at 275 dollars.
Contact Lisa (ARHS) at 253-709-1503. Go to <http://www.simmonskids.com/babiesToddlers/babyFurniture/meridianCollection.cfm> to view manufactures' pictures.

POOL TABLE

Sears brand pool table with green felt. Standard size and in good condition \$50
Judy Dennis at Olympic Middle School
253-631-3340



VACATION

ESCAPE TO MEXICO FOR SPRING BREAK!

Luxury Jr. Suite sleeps 2-4
Pueblo Bonito All Suites Resort and Spa
Los Cabos, Mexico

Overlooking the Pacific Ocean
Offered for \$1200 for the week
(Rents for \$2,000+)

Contact: Sharon Gilbert (Chinook)/Terri Diehm (Hazelwood)

SERVICES

External Residential House Painting. Free Estimates!

Erik Gunderson, AHS math teacher of geometry (I will not make mistakes), and prior teacher of business ethics classes at WSU and HUI in Vietnam. Protect your investment this summer. 253-229-1540 cell: or email erik-gundy98@yahoo.com or look me up in the email list.

NEED SCREEN PRINTING!

The Visual Communications program at ARHS offers screen-printing services to teachers, PTA, ASB, clubs, fundraisers, and others! We can create artwork for you or work with your ideas. Quality work at low prices.
Contact Gina Sandland @ 253-804-5154 or gsandland@auburn.wednet.edu

SERVICES OFFERED

NUTRITIONAL THERAPY
GUIDED SHOPPING TOURS
PERSONALIZED MENUS
WELLNESS COUNSELING

SPECIALIZING IN

Dietary Support, Depression,
Anxiety, Relationships,
Life Transitions, Spiritual
Exploration, Empowerment

FEES \$30.00-\$90.00 depending on the length of the session

ASHLEY HOWARD—B.A., M.ED.

WELLNESS PRACTITIONER

17605 109th Street Ct. E., Bonney Lake, WA 98391

ASHLEY@BODY-TEMPLE.COM—206-962-1012

- Ads are run in the AEA Marketplace on a first come, first served basis pending available space.
- Ads are accepted only in written form.
- Direct ads to Kimberly Greene via e-mail at office@auburnea.org
- Ads are subject to approval from the Executive Board and content may be edited for length.