

# IN THE KNOW

## \*\* Legislative Edition \*\*



Auburn Education Association

April 28, 2017, Legislative

### Pres Says....

Dear AEA Members,

As you might be aware, the Washington State Legislature is in special session since they couldn't complete their work in a timely manner during the regular legislative session. One of their tasks is to comply with the Supreme Court's McCleary Decision – to fully fund public education which is our state's paramount duty. The Governor, the House of Representatives, and the Senate have each presented their proposed budgets for accomplishment of the court's demand. I am including in the newsletter a side-by-side comparison of both the House and the Senate budgets. WEA supports the House budget but realizes that in the end, compromise will occur.

I plan to share with you my work to make AEA's voice heard and to ask for your assistance in our fight to make public schools better than ever.

At the Representative Assembly in Spokane, Presidents from all over the state gathered for a meeting to brainstorm ideas for actions that will get the attention of our legislators.

#### **Here are a few actions that various locals are taking:**

- ◆ Reach out to community members, families, businesses, and PTA's to help us spread the word about fully funding public education – EVERYONE call and write Legislators
- ◆ Sign waving after school during rush hour in Auburn or on 167 and I-5 overpasses
- ◆ Rolling walkouts (partial or full day)
- ◆ Spread our message on social media- Full funding of Public Education
- ◆ Run a newspaper advertisement in the local newspaper

#### **Additional ideas from WEA:**

The first two weeks of May will be for members to go to Olympia to demonstrate against the following:

Mondays: Lowering of teaching standards supported by the senate

Tuesdays: Limiting educator pay when we're already experiencing a shortage of educators

Wednesday: Reduction of Special Education Funding

Thursday: Increasing class size by eliminating voter approved class size reductions

Friday: Restriction on Local Tri Pay

Let me know if there are some of you who are interested and able to go to Olympia during the first 2 weeks of May.

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The third and fourth weeks in May will be visibility:

This is when we plan to wave signs after school and purchase an advertisement in the Auburn Reporter. More information will follow after the May 8th Executive Board Meeting.

This week I sat in on a hearing in Olympia and visited with Dr. Spicciati about the letter sent to the legislature by thirty-three of thirty-five of the Superintendents in our area. The two superintendents who didn't sign the letter are from Lake Washington and Bellevue. When I met with Dr. Spicciati, I took with me the resolution from Bellevue and mentioned that I would have preferred he had chosen to sign something like Lake Washington and Bellevue did rather than the letter he signed.

We did have a good conversation, and although we don't see eye-to-eye on everything, I truly believe a compromise is possible. Dr. Spicciati shared with me a letter he had written to Legislators and an email explaining his position on certain points in the superintendents' letter.

Dr. Spicciati has agreed to join us for sign waving if we choose some days that he is available.

AEA will get moving on this after our executive board meeting in May. If you have any suggestions, please share. If you'd like to demonstrate in Olympia, please contact me.

In solidarity,

Dianne Jordan, Auburn EA President

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## LETTER FROM DR. SPICCIATI TO THE LEGISLATORS



March 24, 2017

Dear Representative (sent to several legislators):

Before I get to the issue at hand, please accept my sincere thanks for addressing the levy cliff before any significant concerns went into effect. Sometimes "first do no harm" is just the right approach to a complex challenge. My school board and colleagues in Auburn are grateful for your timely action. Also, thank you for your accessibility. I believe we are gifted with a remarkably responsive delegation in the 30th, 31st, and 47th districts. Just in the past week, I have seen six of our nine legislators at town halls and I know all of you are engaging constituents in various ways that should be a model to elected officials at all levels of government. I am proud to have such diligent and committed public servants representing our area and consider each of you to be a friend of the Auburn School District. The challenges you face this session are not lost on me or my colleagues and we are always willing to help you if we can be of assistance.

The purpose of this letter is to raise an issue that is not getting enough attention in my opinion - the need for an effective transition from the current educator compensation system to a new system that may emerge from this session. There is an assumption in the public that teacher salaries will increase when education is fully funded by the state, stoked in part by the media's focus on the large increase to new teachers in the Governor's proposed budget. However, upon closer review, it is likely that the "McCleary solution" may reduce salaries for many teachers.

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No education funding proposal to date - not the Governor's budget nor education proposals that have emerged from the House and Senate - would fund Auburn School District teachers at current levels. Every proposal to date would pay at least some Auburn teachers less in 2018-19 than they are earning today. In some cases, salary decreases would reach into five figures. Historically, Auburn School District pays teachers more than most districts, but this impact is far from unique to Auburn. In fact, several districts around the state would be hit harder than Auburn and all of our neighboring districts would be affected in some way.

Perhaps this will not come to pass. We await clarification of SB 5023, which addresses use of local levy dollars moving forward and anticipate additional proposals from the legislature this session that could enhance educator compensation. However, I urge you to have staff review all proposals for educator compensation against the actual pay currently received by teachers in your local districts. My staff would be willing to assist you. In the event the legislature deems it necessary to implement a solution that will negatively impact any teacher, it is of critical importance that you advocate for a sensible transition plan. Freezing salaries for years should not be an option and would be devastating for morale, recruiting and retention. It would be harder for districts to staff our classrooms with quality educators and unfair to educators to lose ground financially in the name of fully funding education. There is precedent for district-by-district adjustments that get the state to new school funding system without resulting in years of pay stagnation for teachers.

I hope you receive this in the spirit I intend, of providing helpful information. I have not discussed this letter with WEA or any local members, rather I am attempting to alert you to an issue of significance before major decisions are made. Auburn School District is midway through a strategic planning process that will establish ambitious goals for our students and ask more of our educators. Please ensure that the final plan to fully fund education compensates teachers appropriately.

Sincerely,

Alan Spicciati, Ed.D.

Superintendent



# SUPPORT FROM OTHER UNIONS

April 14, 2017

The Honorable Members of the Washington State House of Representatives  
The Honorable Members of the Washington State Senate  
Washington Legislative Building Olympia, WA 98504--0600

Dear legislators,

A group of school district superintendents recently submitted state budget recommendations to legislators, the governor, OSPI and others.

These superintendents claimed to be representing the thousands of public school employees working in their school districts. As leaders of the unions representing most K-12 public school employees in Washington, and the working families whose children are educated by those employees, we want you to know many of the superintendents' recommendations do not reflect the interests of the school employees we represent, especially as they relate to our members' longstanding collective bargaining rights.

Collective bargaining in Washington's school districts has worked well for more than 40 years. It is the collaborative, two-way process administrators and employees use to make decisions that meet the unique needs of the students in each school district. Collective bargaining works best when there is mutual trust, respect and open communication.

Unfortunately, these superintendents failed to observe those principles. The superintendents never informed their local unions about the recommendations either before or after they submitted them.

Under the circumstances, we believe it is important to reiterate our strong support for the collective bargaining rights of public sector employees.

We oppose any limits or restrictions on existing collective bargaining rights for K-12 certificated and classified school employees, whether through budget language or by directly changing the existing bargaining laws.

Contrary to superintendents' inaccurate claims, the Supreme Court's

McCleary decision does not require "reforming" school employees' collective bargaining rights.

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We oppose the following recommendations made by the school superintendents:

- Limiting TRI pay for teachers
- Eliminating local health care insurance choices by moving all K-12 employees into a state-run system
- Limiting how much school districts can invest in their teachers and support staff
- Limiting how local levy funding is spent.
- Reductions in the total amount of levy funding districts can raise with voter approval

Except for the health care proposal, all of these restrictions on collective bargaining are embodied in the Republican budget passed by the Senate, which we oppose.

We encourage you to pass a final state budget that amply funds public schools, fully funds state employee contracts and protects the collective bargaining rights of all public workers.

Thank you for your consideration,

American Federation of Teachers, Washington

Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen, Washington State Legislative Board

International Association of Machinists, 751

International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Joint Council 28

International Union of Operating Engineers, 609

Service Employees International Union, 6

Service Employees International Union, 775

Service Employees International Union, 925

United Food and Commercial Workers, 367

Washington State Building and Construction Trades Council

Washington State Council of City and County Employees, AFSCME Council 2

Washington State Council of Fire Fighters

Washington Education Association

Washington Public Employees Association, UFCW 365

Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO

cc: The Honorable Jay Inslee, Governor of Washington

# Side-by-Side House vs. Senate Budget Comparison (May 2017)

HOUSE BUDGET	TOPIC	SENATE BUDGET
Starting pay \$45,000, which becomes the minimum salary for all teachers. 10% hikes for 2 yrs. Then COLAs.	STARTING PAY	Starting pay \$45,000, which becomes the minimum salary for all teachers. 10% hike after 3 yrs.
Approximate 30% raise over 3 years through the use of an "average pay" pot of money sent to districts	OVERALL TEACHER PAY	Pay cuts and/or lay-offs for veteran Teachers due to 80% wage cap for districts -- LESS than current average.
Keeps NBTC bonus & all MAs. Renegotiated Salary Allocation Models could change value of degrees.	NATIONAL BOARD	Cuts NBCT bonus & eliminates out-of-subject-area MAs from pay bumps.
Maintains current culture of collaboration among educators	MERIT PAY COMPETITION	Imposes merit pay competition awarding 1-time bonus to top 5% of teachers as determined by admin. & Board
Keeps state's insurance contribution at \$780/month, which has gone up just \$12 over past several years.	INSURANCE COSTS	Keeps state's insurance contribution at \$780/month, which has gone up just \$12 over past several years.
Retains Class-size Initiative 1351 (but still just for K-3)	CLASS SIZE	Raises class sizes in K-3 by eliminating I-1351 Class Size Initiative
Converts 2000 COLA initiative into permanent law. The COLAs have been waived for much of past 15 yrs.	COST-OF-LIVING ADJ.	Eliminates voter-approved COLAs. Period.
Maintains collective bargaining rights.	BARGAINING RIGHTS	Limits collective bargaining primarily by severely restricting the funds that can be bargained for.
Funds more support staff (para-pros, behavior spec., family outreach coord., etc.) + 60% pay bump over 3 yrs.	SUPPORT STAFF	No additional funds to address trauma/behavior staffing needs (i.e. counselors/paras/bhvr. spec.)
New B&O tax hikes for larger businesses (B&O tax cuts for smalls) + Cap. Gains hike for \$25k+ gains.	TAX REVENUES	New \$\$-per-student funding invites vouchers. Adds new state levy & cuts local levies from 24% to 10%.
Maintains local district control over most of the funds it receives from the state and from local levies.	CONTROL OF FUNDS	State swaps local levies for state levy and dictates how more of the money is used by districts.
Local levy lid falls from 28% to 24%.	LEVIES	Lid falls to 10% / adds new state levy shifting more of the burden onto Seattle residents
The net amount of new money devoted to public education this biennium is roughly \$2.2 billion.	OVERALL FUNDING	The net amount of new money devoted to public education this biennium is roughly \$0.8 billion.
Freezes current tuition costs	HIGHER ED TUITION	Increases tuition costs
Continues current support for Special Education and Gifted programs.	SPECIAL ED FUNDING	Funding for Special Education and for Gifted programs is reduced.
Due process rules for teacher dismissal remain.	DUE PROCESS	New teacher dismissal process w/out ability to appeal past local school board, thus eliminating due process.
Protects current high certification standards. Passed HB 1341 allowing 75 clock hrs. in place of Pro-Teach.	CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT	Qualify to teach by passing background check (seriously). Currently holding HB 1341 hostage.
Attract & retains high quality teachers through significant wage increases and added district resources	TEACHER SHORTAGE	Attracts new teachers w/\$45k pay. Apparently, plans to replace teachers by allowing almost anyone to teach.

## WEA FIGURES ON THE IMPACT OF THE SENATE BUDGET ON AUBURN SCHOOL DISTRICT

### Impact of Senate Budget on District Staffing Levels

The Senate's education plan (SB 5607 & SB 5875) limits school district general fund expenditures for compensation to no more than 80%.<sup>1</sup>

If this requirement was in effect in 2015-16, how would it have impacted Auburn School District?

In 2015-16...

What did Auburn report for total expenditures in the district's general fund? \$184,701,714

What did Auburn report for total spending on salary and benefits? \$160,692,253

What did the district's reported salary and benefits represent as a percentage of total general fund spending in Auburn? 87.0%

Is the reported % in salary and benefits above the 80% threshold? Yes, spending is above the threshold.

What amount of salary and benefit spending would have been needed to be cut in Auburn, to meet the 80% threshold? -\$12,930,882

Assuming the reported salary and benefit spending proportionate to each staff type would have to be reduced to meet the threshold, how many FTE would need to be cut in Auburn?

"2015-16

Reported FTE<sup>2</sup>" Estimated staffing cut in Auburn to meet 80% threshold?

FTE % of Reported

Certificated Instructional Staff 963.63 -82.24 -8.5%

Certificated Administrative Staff 60.75 -5.18 -8.5%

Classified Staff 595.26 -50.80 -8.5%

1,619.64 -138.23 -8.5%

1. SB5607 reads: Beginning in the 2018-19 school year, the total salary and benefits paid to certificated instructional, certificated administrative, and classified staff shall not exceed eighty percent of the district's total expenditures from the district's general fund. For districts that exceed the eighty percent threshold as of the 2017-18 school year based on school expenditure data reported to the office of the superintendent of public instruction, such districts have until the 2023-24 school year to comply.

2. District-wide reported FTE in ALL programs -- state, local and federally supported.

Note: While there are a number of moving parts with future education funding, this tool is intended to provide you with estimated impacts based on final 2015-16 staffing/budget data.

Source:

2015-16 F-196 Access Database

2015-16 OSPI Personnel Reports