**MEA Executive Board Election Results**

Thank you to the 564 members that participated in the recent MEA election process. These educators will devote their time and talents to represent your interests as elected members of the 2020-2022 Executive Board.

- **Vice President Treasurer:** Tory Karchner (MA – Mathematics)
- **Secretary:** Heather Craggs (Mentor Teacher)
- **Member-at-Large:** Darcia Ramos (EX – Mathematics)
- **MECU Representative:** Philip Falk (PP – PE)

**MEA Election Results for WEA Representative Assembly**

The 100th WEA Representative Assembly will be April 16-18 at the Spokane Convention Center. WEA-RA is the highest decision-making body of the Washington Education Association. MEA members have elected the following delegates to represent us:

- Molly Addicott (PP)
- Philip Falk (PP)
- Michael Peña (MA)
- Neil Adkison (ACES)
- Nardos Habtemicael (CH)
- Brandon Pope (MA)
- Natasia Brooks (MA)
- Alexandria Johns (HS/MS)
- Angeli Seng (CH)
- Mike Coffey (HO)
- Michael Lewin (EX)
- Sobia Sheikh (MA)
- Leslie Dodson (PP/SL)
- Sonya-Prajna Patrick (MA)
- DanaWiebe (MEA)

**Tax Information – Bad News**

In December 2017, the “Tax Cuts and Jobs Act” was signed into law by President Trump. This act changed the tax code, eliminating the itemized deduction for “miscellaneous expenses” (as a reminder, these expenses had to exceed 2% of your adjusted gross income). One of the miscellaneous expenses that used to be deductible as a miscellaneous expense was unreimbursed employee business expenses — this includes education expense related to your work, and it includes union dues. As such, MEA has not listed the deductible amounts in this issue of Cross Currents, as we have typically done in past years.

**Tax Information – Good News**

The tax reform of 2017 kept the $250 above-the-line deduction for classroom supplies, and it’s still available for the 2019 tax year. The $250 deduction is particularly advantageous because it is above the line on Schedule A, which means you don’t have to itemize to take it and it reduces your overall adjusted gross income (AGI). This becomes even more important under the most recent tax reform, which virtually doubled the standard deduction, setting the threshold even higher for choosing to itemize. Legislation in 2015 indexed the amount to inflation—though it is unchanged at $250 for 2019—and allows professional development expenses to be included in the deduction. If both spouses filing jointly are educators, each can claim the deduction, for a total of $500.
MECU Building Visits

Our Mukilteo Extra-Curricular Classified Unit Contract expires the 31st of August, 2020. The MECU Bargaining Team will be in buildings having one-on-one conversations with our MECU members. Our goal is to speak with every member of MECU in order to help us develop some bargaining priorities for the sport/activity that they coach or manage. We are excited for the opportunity to meet with you. Look for one of our bargainers in your building on Wednesday February 26th.

[Image of MECU Bargainers]

In addition to one-on-one visits, your MECU Bargaining Team welcomes groups and individuals to submit ideas to our team through MECU Bargaining Input Forms.

Coaches/Advisors should submit these forms as a pdf to Dana Wiebe no later than Friday, March 6.

NEA's Read Across America Online Resource Calendar

Bring the celebration of reading and literacy into your classroom, library, and school all year long – through NEA’s Read Across America program. Use the newly launched Read Across America digital calendar to plan ahead for special celebrations and observances throughout the school year. Each month, you can learn about suggested books for readers of all levels, and explore activities and resources to help you create fun, exciting learning experiences around them. From tips for readers to recommended books that showcase diversity, NEA has a link to several tools and resources to help you and your students celebrate Read Across America! Need help finding books to put into the hands of readers? Check out these additional resources to bring print and online books to qualifying schools and students.

5D+ Evaluation: Scoring

Classroom teachers receive a performance rating for each of the eight (8) evaluative criteria. Classroom teachers are assumed to be Proficient (3) and evidence is collected in the normal course of professional practice to confirm or modify this performance evaluation rating. Local decisions were made at the bargaining table regarding the assessment of the components and how those components are aggregated up to one criterion score by using the instructional framework.

MEA Contract: Evaluation Performance Scoring and Ratings:

Criterion-level ratings are based upon the preponderance of evidence. This evidence will consider the growth of the classroom teacher over time and the relevancy of the criterion to the classroom teacher’s work assignment.

Highlighted areas on this particular criterion demonstrate the “preponderance of evidence” merits a criterion score of “3” (Proficient) as that is predominantly where the teacher performs.
2020 Teaching Equity Conference

Pilchuck UniServ Council and the Pilchuck Diversity Network invites you to its Teaching Equity Conference 2020: Anti-Racist Pedagogy on February 29 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Mariner High School.

- 8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Light breakfast and registration
- 9:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Conference
- Delicious lunch provided
- Free clock hours (4.5 hours)

Workshop offerings include:
- Using Restorative Practices to Create Safe and Supportive Teaching and Learning Environments
- Culturally Responsive Classroom Interactions
- Common Sense Economics --- Race and the Economy
- Being a White Ally or Accomplice
- Race and Labor History
- An Indigenous Epistemology to Navigate Anti-Racist Conversations
- Best Practices to Support Native American Students

The conference will feature poet and educator Christian Paige as the keynote speaker, and Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer April Sims as the closing speaker.

Registration is free to all members, and closes on February 21. Register online before space fills up! If you have questions regarding registration, please contact Shelly Lamb or call the Pilchuck UniServ office at 425-258-3697.

Know Your CBA: Assignment, Vacancies and Transfer

The 2019 - 2022 Collective Bargaining Agreement outlines member rights in terms of Assignment, Vacancies and Transfer Section (Article IV, Sections 11–12, pp. 26-31.) The process for voluntary transfers begins in March and will continue through the summer. A list of known vacancies will be posted on the District’s website according to the following schedule:

(a) March 6 (closing on March 11)
(b) March 20 (closing on March 25)
(c) April 3 (closing on April 15)
(d) April 24 (closing on April 29)
(e) May 8 (closing on May 13)
(f) May 22 (closing on May 28)
(g) June 5 (closing on June 10)

Summer Vacancies:
Vacancies occurring after the last day of school and prior to July 15 will be posted for transfer. The following procedure, in addition to the other procedures outlined herein, shall be observed:

a. Employees with specific interests in possible vacancies must notify the Human Resources Office of their interest in writing during the last regular week of school or no later than June 30. The notice shall include a summer address and telephone number as well as an alternative phone number where the employee can be contacted.

b. When a vacancy occurs during this period and an employee has expressed a transfer interest in a position similar to the vacancy, the Human Resources Office shall make all diligent efforts to notify the employee.

c. The employee shall indicate to the Human Resources Office whether they are interested in the specific vacancy when notified. All interested employees will be considered for the position pursuant to the criteria outlined in this section.

Vacancies occurring on or after July 15 will not be posted for transfer. However, employees who have expressed an interest in specific vacancies as noted in a. above will be eligible for transfer. Procedures b. and c. above shall apply.

Transfer language applicable to ESAs:

ESAs (SLPs, OTs, PTs, Nurses, and Psychologists):

- Prior to hiring any additional ESAs, the District will offer its part-time staff the additional FTE based on seniority unless the specific assignment of the additional FTE results in inefficient use of service time.
- By April 1, employees shall be provided the opportunity to advise the Director of Special Education or designee of employee preferences for assignments.
- The Director of Special Education or designee shall consider employee preferences when an opening exists, and shall notify, in writing, each teacher whose request(s) for a new assignment was not granted and the reason(s) for not granting the request(s).
- One (1) day of released time or additional compensation paid at per diem will be given to the teacher who is making an involuntary reassignment which requires moving their office to a new worksite. The District will provide transportation of an employee’s materials for a voluntary or involuntary move to another worksite.
2020 WEA-Retired Scholarships

WEA-Retired is offering up to ten $1,000 nonrenewable scholarships to aid WEA members in enhancing skills in specific education areas and/or attaining or maintaining a teaching certificate. The scholarships cannot be used to pay for incurred debt for past classes or reimbursement for pre-paid classes. You must be a WEA member to apply. Applications must include two items: a cover letter and a letter of application. The due date is March 10, 2020.

New Leave Options: PFML and MEA Shared Sick Leave Bank

There are many circumstances in the lives of our members that require them to take leave, e.g., serious health conditions that prevent them from working, the need to care for a family member, time to bond with a new child, or time to spend with a family member preparing for military service overseas. New state leave, and new provisions in our contract, have vastly improved our options for those times we need to give or receive care. If you find yourself needing to take leave, please contact payroll staff to determine the option(s) that best meet your need(s).

Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) is a new benefit for Washington workers. PFML entitles you to up to 12 weeks of partial wage replacement. Your exact benefit is determined by your earned wages, the state median income, and other factors. More detailed information on PFML can be found here. In addition to our ability to donate leave directly to a fellow member, MEA members may now donate to and request leave from a shared leave bank. MEA has worked with the District to create Shared Leave Operating Procedures in order to explain your options. MEA hopes that each member that can will donate a day or two to our new shared leave bank. Numerous small donations can have an infinite impact to people that would otherwise have to go without pay or health insurance when they have run out of leave.

WEA Elections – Vote Today

WEA elections are live and ready for you to vote. Go to https://myassociationvotes.com/wea/ and enter your:

✓ Username (first initial of your first name and your full last name – for example, Jane Doe's username would be jdoe) and
✓ Password (your five-digit home zip code).

When you log in, you will find instructions on how to vote and the names of the candidates running to represent your council. MEA has several candidates running! When you click on the candidate's name, if they provided short biographical information, you will see it pop up there. Voting is open now and runs through midnight March 1. Please take the time (only one minute) to vote!

2019 – 2020 MEA EXECUTIVE BOARD

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"If you want to lift yourself up, lift up someone else.”
– Booker T. Washington