



Action Line

Vancouver Education Association

December 2024

The Political Season is just beginning

We know the election cycle is barely behind us, but it's already time to gear up for the legislative session that will begin in January. Our elected WEA Board passed a 2025 legislative agenda that focuses on funding, especially special education funding and updates to the school-funding formula.

Dismal Budget Forecast While we are fortunate to live in a state that values public education and organized labor, the budget forecast comprised of revenue estimates for the current biennium (ending June 30, 2025, the next biennium (2025-27) and subsequent biennium (2027-29), The forecasts signal availability of resources for state services. By law, the Governor is required to propose, and the legislature is required to enact, an operating budget that is balanced over four years. The bad news is that despite retention of the capital gains tax, [revenue forecasts are projecting downward](#). Governor Inslee issued a directive last Friday to state agencies freezing most discretionary and non-essential hiring, service contract, purchasing and travel.

Our voice needs to be loud and clear. Last week, VEA President, Jamie Anderson, Executive Director Graham Picklesimer joined Superintendent Snell and board members Kyle Sproul, Tracy Barrows, and Sandra Zavala-Ortega for a legislative outlook sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce. In attendance were local legislators from 17th, 18, 20th and 49th districts. Both parties, Democratic and Republican all voiced an interest in supporting Public Education. They echoed a desire to hear from you! If you live in these surrounding legislative districts, please communicate candidly and frequently.

WEA's legislative agenda

- **Support students struggling with behavioral challenges**
- **Fully fund Special Education**
- **Ensure every district has the resources it needs to recruit and retain educators**
- **Ensure every school & college has the resources it needs to provide engaging learning opportunities**
- **Provide professional livable wages for ESPs and Adjunct Faculty**

Help us reach our goal of 100 new (or increase) WEAPAC contributions by [completing this form](#) – Vancouver EA is our local. VEA is also looking for WEAPAC contributing members to testify directly (remote or in-person funded by the Association) on WEA's legislative priorities or areas impacting your specialty or the student you serve. Contact VEA if this interests you!

Bargaining Team 2024-25

The VEA Rep Council affirmed Karina Rocha a the Specialist rep to the 2024-25 Bargaining Team at their December meeting:

VEBA Yearly Vote

Rep Council certified the recent VEBA vote. The results are in... VEBA at Retirement 92.68% approval. Annual VEBA sick leave cashout (>1440 hrs) 96.67% approval.

Get your Game On!

VEA has teamed up with the Portland Trailblazers for member access to games and Rose Quarter shows at the Moda Center at discounted rates.



Rip City Rewards – Discount on ALL home games and select events like Disney on Ice at the Rose Quarter this season.

www.rosequarter.com/ripcityrewards **Promo Code: TBVEA.** Please note that the offer may change throughout the year, but the initial deal includes at least a 10% discount on ALL home games this season!

VEA's 2nd Night at the Blazers This special group night is scheduled for January 30th. You will get early access to the game vs. Orlando allowing you to shoot a free throw on the court after the game! * Fan experience is subject to hitting the minimum of 50 tickets purchased by the VEA group. Visit: Rosequarter.com/groupnights Promo code: VEA2025. Order deadline is January 27.

Member Engagement



SPARKS!



Are you a member with 0-10 years of overall teaching experience? SPARKS is a high energy, interactive experience aimed at VEA's newest members. Facilitated by SPARKS graduates, SPARKS provides an opportunity to engage and learn techniques for your classroom, engage with the association, and gain deeper insights on your profession. SPARKS is held at the Best Western Ocean View in Seaside, Oregon March 7-9. Release, travel, hotel, meals, and program are provided by the VEA. Applications were sent to members in this demographic via the interoffice mail. Please see your building rep or contact VEA for more information.

Stay on the Nice List Letters

VEA would like to assist in sending a personalized greeting to all who celebrate special days in December, and to encourage kids both big and small to stay on the Nice List! You can help by identifying a recipient and up to four ways to encourage these attributes by December 16th on this survey

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8Y7Y26X>.

Elves will assist with personalized letters to be mailed to select recipients.

LOOKING FOR LEADERS



There are many hats to be worn in Association work. The more members wearing those hats, the more effective and strong the association becomes.

The opportunity for members to run for a leadership position on the **2025 VEA Executive Board** begins with open nominations at the January 6th Rep Council meeting. The VEA positions of President (includes WEARA, NEARA and WEA Board of Directors), 1st Vice President, 3rd VP Member Engagement, Treasurer, Primary Trustee, and HS Trustee.

Is there a smaller way to get involved?

Yes! You do not have to be a building rep. You do not have to be on the board. You DO have to be a VEA member and commit to attend and report back to the membership. Nominations also open in January for VEA delegates to the **WEA Rep Assembly** (Spokane – April 24-26) and the **NEA Rep Assembly** (July 2-6). in Portland, Oregon. Expenses are paid by the association.

Nominations will close at the February 3rd Rep Council meeting. Candidate forms will be available in January by request from the VEA office.

Stay tuned in...

VEA Paint/Sip night... January 31... Watch for registration and more information soon!

!! Project Help !!

Workers Comp Workshop

RESCHEDULED due to low enrollment...

Still Looking for IMC Representative

The district Instructional Materials Committee (IMC) is seeking VEA member input. There are currently openings for:

- Middle School Teacher (1)

This is a yearlong commitment and participants will be compensated for the one-hour monthly meeting. Contact VEA if interested.

Know your Contract



TRI The third PL day worked in October is paid on the December paycheck (12.4Aii and Appendix D)

Evaluation By the end of the first semester, the evaluator will conference with the employee and provide a mid-year report with preliminary scores where available (8.4N)



Any move from a Focused evaluation to a Comprehensive evaluation must be done in writing by December 15 of a given school year, including an explanation of the specific performance deficiencies noted by the evaluator in a post-observation meeting which warrant the move. (8.4I) **Notify VEA if you receive this notification!*

December is Human Rights Month

(Wikipedia)

The **Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)** is an international document adopted by the United Nations General Assembly that enshrines the rights and freedoms of all human beings. It was accepted by the General Assembly on 10 December 1948.

December 10, the anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration, is celebrated annually as World Human Rights Day or International Human Rights Day. The commemoration is observed by individuals, community and religious groups, human rights organizations, parliaments, governments, and the United Nations.

Please consider [this United Nations resource](#) as well as a NEA resource with [11 Children's Books About Human Rights](#) from Lee & Low.

VEA Member Benefits



Dash through all the savings this holiday season with exciting discounts and benefits designed for you and your family! First things first! Every member should to these THREE things ASAP:

- 1) Visit www.neamb.com/connect This is the gateway to your Association benefits.
- 2) Click the BLUE "Register Now" link so you'll be recognized to receive special discounts and important benefits information.
- 3) Name your beneficiary for your no-cost, Complimentary Life Insurance: Click the "register Your Beneficiary" button. Don't leave a benefit unclaimed.

Navigate Student Loan Debt Seminar

Corebridge Financial is offering webinars on Student Loan Debt on the Third Thursday of Every Month at 5:00 pm. This 45-60 minute educational workshop will cover the basics of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness, Teacher & Nurse Loan forgiveness, choosing the most appropriate repayment plan, news and recent developments affecting borrowers, etc. [Click here to register!](#) One year of SAVI is FREE @NEAMB!

Emergency School Closures

The District will make a reasonable effort to decide as early as possible when schools will be closed or the opening of school will be delayed.

Employees who have students on-site are expected to report to your assigned buildings at their usual starting times or as reasonably near thereto, keeping in mind safety, but no later than thirty minutes prior to the opening of school for students.



When schools are closed early due to inclement weather, on-site staff members shall be permitted to leave as soon as practical after the release of students, and assuring that adequate supervision exists until all students have departed.

Freedom Foundation Warning



Like the unwanted fruitcake this time of year, we expect to hear from the Freedom Foundation this season in their annual attempt to thwart and weaken our ability to stand up for students and public education. Anti-union factions such as the Freedom Foundation and Choice for Teachers have tried mailers, email, leafletting, and other means to coerce members into dropping their membership. Don't be duped! They lobby to weaken our collective bargaining rights and are funded by out-of-state interests. Contact VEA immediately for follow-up actions by the Association if you receive any communications asking you to change your membership status.

Our collective voice achieves powerful results for our students and ourselves. With a strong, united membership, we have the power to improve and protect our rights and economic security, and to fight for the best interests of our students.

Teaching without a union?

Do you ever wonder what it would be like to individually negotiate your pay and working conditions? What would your work life look like without a union? Everything's Better when we're Together!

Together we realized a substantial increase to base pay and supplemental work is paid at per diem instead of a curriculum rate.

2016-17 BA+0 \$35,700 Top pay \$67,288 plus TRI
2024-25 BA+0 \$56,486 Top pay \$106,470 plus TRI

Over the past three years we have received a 16.9% increase in salary (7.5 + 5.7+ 3.7%). Together we achieved this raise. We know this is only a start and educators deserve more!

In this contract, overload at Secondary now includes compensation for individual class overload as well as the aggregate overload. Full day Elementary class sizes went down for the first time in over 20 years.

Work at the state level and the McCleary decision resulted in Washington state ranking 4th in the nation for average teacher salaries!!

We have more work to do... We are Better Together!

Unpaid Leave Membership Options

Occasionally members find themselves in an unpaid leave of absence situation. What happens to membership during this time? Once a member falls out of active membership (working your base contract and paying dues), their membership falls into an unpaid "non-member" status as they are no longer "actively working". Upon return to work, your membership renews automatically.

Reserve membership is an option if you would like to retain benefits provided through the NEA (Life insurance, etc) and WEA (Professional development), during this leave period. It does not include liability coverage as you are "not actively working". Reserve dues are paid via the WEA web page and a credit card. There is no local option for reserve membership.

A recap of options while on an unpaid leave:

- 1) Do nothing, pay no dues, and be a non-member with a gap in membership.
- 2) Become a reserve member (WEA and NEA only) to preserve NEA member benefits and access to PD. Join as a reserve member via the WEA website and pay with credit card.

Last Minute Shopping?



Columbia Sportswear Employee Store (prAna, Mountain Hardwear). Shop through December 29th. It's golden ticket time – Save 20% off select styles plus an additional 10% off your entire purchase now through December 29th. Closed Christmas day. [Bring this flier and your ID](#) to shop



Adidas Employee Store. Shop now through December 31st. Call the store for holiday hours. [Bring this flier](#) and your ID to shop

Professional Development Opportunity



INTERRUPTING & DISRUPTING BIAS

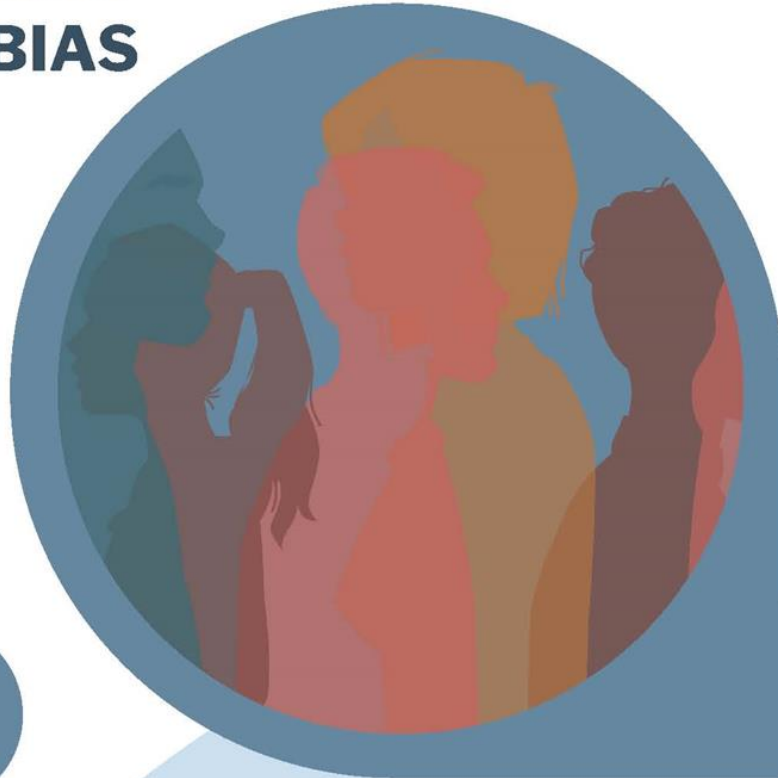
Saturday,
January 11, 2025

9 AM - 12 PM

Umpqua Community Room
101 E. 6th Street
Vancouver, WA 98660

WEA Facilitator:

Randy Paddock
WEA Equity & Diversity
Coordinator



**REGISTER
NOW!!**



[https://wea-
win.org/events/470](https://wea-win.org/events/470)

In this training, you will:

- Learn about your own and others' cultural identities, and how discrimination occurs in both learning and workplace environments.
- Build skills in addressing situations and individuals in the professional setting, whether by calling in or calling out.
- Learn how to create and sustain a safe learning and working environment that removes barriers and fosters a more inclusive setting for students and colleagues.

Open to VEA and VAESP members

*VEA members may pay themselves using Individual PD funds

Questions? Contact Cindy Brown at the VEA Office (360)695-3397 or
cbrown@washingtonea.org

2509 Broadway -- Vancouver, WA 98663 * Phone 360-695-3397 -- FAX 360-694-8337
Jamie Anderson, President * Graham Picklesimer, Executive Director * Cindy Brown, Admin. Assistant
*Sandy Kokko, WEA-Retired Liaison. * www.vancouverea.org * Facebook: Vancouver EA