

Unity

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Start/Dismissal Time Schedule: Bell Times

By Olga Addae SEA President

On April 10th Holly Ferguson, the SPS Director of Policy and Government relations met with me and Ammon McWashington and Tom Bishop of Transportation. The issue arose when the School Board voted March 16th, 2009 to change the Start/Dismissal Time schedule to accommodate the suggested transportation changes which are projected to save the district 2.2 million dollars. The change added 10 minutes to the elementary school day, thereby increasing student contact time.

In our conversations it became apparent that to have enough school buses for the first tier, all K-8's have to run on the first tier because most high schools no longer use yellow buses. It was apparent at the school board testimonies parents did not understand why K-8's would start so early. This is an example of the transparency by the district policy. It also became clear that because the secondary schools have a half hour longer day, the buses couldn't deliver the secondary students and get to the elementary schools before 3:40.

Fortunately, Holly Ferguson heard SEA concerns, and we reworked the newly adopted Board Policy, and she wrote the amendment which was presented and acted on at the April 22, 2009 Board meeting.

NEW BELL TIMES for elementary schools: 9:40am-3:40pm. SEA has assurance from transportation that the buses will be waiting for students when the 3:40 dismissal bell rings. So when does school start? Transportation says the students will arrive 20-15 minutes early to assure they have time for breakfast. Class should start at 9:40am.

SEA needs your help...Please notify SEA if

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Bargaining Update

The SEA Negotiations Team met with the SPS Negotiation Team for the first time on Friday, April 10, 2009. Our entire SEA team was present including the recent addition of middle school teacher, Debra Tarpley. The District's team consists of Chief Spokesperson and Labor Relations Director, Ricardo Cruz; Labor Relations Managers, Misa Garmoe and Gloria Morris; Instructional Director, Scott Whitbeck; HR Analysts, Eva Edwards, Sue Means, and Demetrice Lewis; Principals, Phil Brockman and Awnie Thompson; and Budget Manager, Linda Sebring. The teams set norms and operating principles of how we would conduct our negotiation meetings. We have confirmed eight bargaining sessions for May and six sessions for June, our next session being scheduled for a full day on May 5.

The SEA presented a list of Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) sections that we knew we did not want to negotiate. These were items that our members did not address in feedback sessions. Most were basic union contract language items found in the majority of CBA's within and outside the education association realm.

SEA also reviewed all three contracts for comparable language. In areas such as representation rights and due process, personnel files, nondiscrimination rights, and some others, we have decided to take the most appropriate language and

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Bell Times *(continued from p. 1)*

your school adds time to your work day by extending bell times.

Note: The K-8 issue needs to still be addressed and SEA will be having a peer group meeting to discuss possible solutions. We will keep you posted!

Legislature cuts K-12 funding by \$ 1.1 billion

The Legislature is cutting most of I-728 class-size money, all of I-732 COLAs, one Learning Improvement Day (0.5 percent pay cut), levy equalization money, transportation funding, library funding and professional development. The cuts total about 7.3% of the funding needed to maintain existing education programs.

Thousands of teaching and support staff jobs will be eliminated. The budget cuts after-school math programs, student safety programs, tutoring and training for math and science teachers.

Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2261 has NO REVENUE and NO FUNDING

A bill introducing significant changes to public education with NO REVENUE passed the legislature even though the bill was the direct result of the work of the Basic Education FINANCE Task Force that was charged with the explicit goal of improving school funding.

A fuller explanation of the bill is available online at www.seattlewea.org but some of the key elements are:

- Increases instructional hours from 1,000 to 1,080.
- Establishes all-day kindergarten as basic education. Adds early learning to basic education.
- Calls for a data tracking system that has the “capacity to link educator information with student information...”
- Requires the Professional Educator Standards Board (PESB) to adopt performance standards for “effective” teaching, which is not defined - the fourth change to teacher certification in the last 12 years.
- Increases graduation requirements from 19 to 24 credits.

- Creates a work group to recommend compensation changes including: Reducing the number of salary steps; basing salary bonuses on “effective teaching”; addressing regional cost differences. Includes a new prototype schools model for allocating resources, but doesn’t require the Legislature to use it in 2011-13.

Special Ed Update:

SEA President Olga Addae and SEA UniServ Representative Maggie Crain met with Special Education PTSA President, Janet Anderson on April 10. She listened to our concerns about the lack of specificity of the implementation of the new service delivery. We all agreed that we need more clarity on what the plan is and that the rollout could benefit from classroom practitioners participation. Ms. Anderson shared that the District administration had done a pretty thorough job of keeping parent leadership in the loop, but parents now are beginning to wonder exactly how these new changes will work and how the services their students need can be assured.

Colleagues Request for Sick Leave Donations

The following are those in need of sick leave donations: Kristin Schwab, an employee of Thornton Creek and Coe. Joyce Jeong, an office assistant at Wing Luke needs donations to care for husband who just had a transplant. All donations are greatly appreciated. If you can help, see your school secretary for a Sick Leave Donation Form or call Roxana Melville, at 206. 252.0293/or email

Reduction In Force (RIF)

Seattle schools and other districts throughout the state will be facing big cuts from the legislature. Knowing this, SEA wants to prepare you in case you receive a RIF notice. Here are some steps to take NOW. Human Resources reports that RIF notices would be going out no later than May 15th for certificated employees and the end of April for classified employees.

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Know Your Contract

Too many preps are unnecessary burden Secondary Schools are putting together student and teacher schedules for next year. Remember that you have protection against juggling too many subjects. Article 9, Section B of the certificated contract states: *4. The SPS will consider as a reasonable maximum, secondary teacher assignments of no more than three (3) different curriculum course preparations in no more than two (2) subject fields. To the extent possible departments will balance the number of preparations between employees and avoid piling on large numbers of preps and subject matters on teachers new to the profession.*

An example of a schedule that is within the maximum is 2 classes of Pre-Calculus and 2 classes of Integrated 2 A and a Biology class. A class of Integrated 2 A, a class of Pre-Calculus and a class of Integrated 3A (more than two course preparations) would violate the contract as would a schedule 2 classes of Science, two classes of Math and class of Spanish (more than 2 subjects). The spirit of the language is that the teacher be not spread so thin that they cannot develop and implement quality lessons. Sometimes scheduling conflicts make this threshold difficult to meet. An employee may agree to a different schedule, but is not required to. This language in Article 9 applies to all classroom teachers including ELL and SpEd classroom teachers.

5. Variations to the above conditions shall be made by the building principal/ program manager after discussion and mutual agreement between a teacher, an affected grade level, a department, the certificated teaching staff (faculty) or the BLT/Instructional Council. The written record of the arrangement shall be retained on file in the school office and shall be binding on all affected parties for one semester/year as appropriate.

Is someone planning a workload overload for you?

Office Personnel: If your school/program faced a budget cut or downtown decided unilaterally that the school no longer needed a Counseling Secretary, you may be facing an increase in workload for next year. The budget process requires that if there is a reduction in office staffing, that a plan must be developed as to how the work that was done. "All potentially impacted employees, those facing reduction and those remaining, and their supervisor shall meet together to develop an Office Staffing Plan" was the wording in the Green Book a year ago. Although the coinciding "Gold Book" this year did not include the form, it still is a necessary part of budget planning.

Support Workshops for Laid Off/Displaced/Rif'd

May 11th-18th, All vacant **classified** positions will be advertised.

Tuesday, May 19, Certificated Job Fair, 4-6PM @JSCEE for superseniority and 504 displaced certs.

RIF Resource Workshop: Thursday, May 21st 4-6PM @JSCEE Auditorium

Maximum 40 attendees for workshops. To reserve your spot, please RSVP by calling, 206.252.4800

Classified Job Fair for superseniority and 504 displaced classified **Monday, June 15th** 4-6PM, JSCEE

Reduction In Force announcements coming

Human Resources will be sending "Reduction in Force" (Lay Off) notices to classified employees the end of April and certificated employees the second week in May. SEA will receive seniority reports for all employees and employees who believe their seniority has been miscalculated, should definitely call the SEA office at 206.283.8443. SEA and SPS Human Resources are jointly offering RIF information meetings for anyone who is laid off.



"Correction: in the April 3 Unity, the article about Review your Decision-Making Process on page 3 had a line referring to the Achievement Plan. In parentheses, it said (not the CSIP plan). This is incorrect. It should read (now the CSIP plan). "

Bargain Update *(Cont'd from p. 1)*

make sure that it is included in all three documents. The idea is to make generic language read the same no matter for our Cert, SAEOP's and Para's. With some additional ideas thrown in, we presented some of this language and gave our rationale.

We broke at the end of the day and expect the District team to review our proposals before the next session.

After reviewing input session ideas and the survey results from all units (we now have the classified and substitute survey results back), we are putting together a comprehensive package of our membership's interests. Another survey will be coming out soon that will ask members to prioritize items using a forced choice. We will also be scheduling feedback sessions during the latter part of May and during June to have our members offer us their ideas and concerns around contract language that the district or we propose.

The SEA team will keep you informed, while continuing to get feedback. Watch for *Bargaining News* and information in the upcoming *Unity's*. Although we are in tough economic times, we will continue to fight for the rights of our members and for those things that all SEA represented employees deserve to possess for working in Seattle Public Schools.

Planning on retiring, resigning?

If you are sure you want to retire or resign, you can assist your fellow SEA members by giving official notice sooner than later. This way, the District can be more accurate in their staffing plans and can avoid unnecessarily laying off employees.

RIF *(Cont'd from p.3)*

Be prepared for Reduction in Force (Layoffs)

- Keep all notices and paperwork you receive from your employer, especially your RIF notification should you receive one. These explain your appeal rights.
- Check your personnel file. Make sure the information in it is accurate and complete. For example, make sure that your contracted FTE, endorsements and other information are recorded properly. If you find mistakes, correct them as soon as possible. Get a copy.
- Make sure the district has current contact information for you, and keep it updated (mailing address, phone number, e-mail address, etc.). **Accurate contact information is important in case of a recall.**
- Get a complete copy of your personnel file. You may have to pay for the copy charges, but the investment will be worthwhile down the road.
- Obtain letters of recommendation from your principal or other key people and have these recommendations ready in the event you need to look for employment elsewhere. SEA's number is 206.283.8443.

For additional information, visit

http://www.washingtonea.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1329.

CALENDAR



Upcoming Association Meetings:

- SEA Board meeting:** Monday, May 11th, 4:15 p.m. at SEA. To address the body in the Speak Out section from 4:15 - 4:30, email: rredmond@washingtonea.org
- Parapro Meeting:** Tuesday, May 5th, 5:00, SEA.
- Rep Assembly:** Monday, May 18th, 4:15 p.m., at Washington MS.
- Substitute Meeting:** Tues., May 26th, 4:00 at SEA.

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