

April 20, 2010

Dear SEA members:

Last night the Association Representatives voted to approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding Washington State's School Improvement Grant (SIG) for Hawthorne Elementary, West Seattle Elementary and Cleveland High School. A Memorandum of Understanding is necessary when there is a district-wide or multi-school alteration to the terms and conditions under our Collective Bargaining Agreement. This was not an easy decision, was debated at length, and in the end the Association Representatives voted to support the work of their colleagues and collective bargaining. All Association Representatives understand the real issue is the failure of the state to fund education as its paramount duty.

Requirements of State Law: At the February Representative Assembly, a motion to support the negotiation of a MOU was approved. The State law regarding SIG schools states that one of the Federal School Intervention Models must be used. The Federal models are: school closure, turnaround, transformation and/or charter. You can learn more about the requirements of Federal Intervention Models [here](#).

All models have serious concerns for our members. The robust, 2-hour debate at the February RA decided that the SEA would support negotiating a MOU for the Transformation model.

The process of negotiating the MOU: Glenn Bafia, Executive Director of SEA, SEA staff, and colleagues in SIG schools met with District representatives over a four-week period to negotiate the terms of the MOU. The MOU was revised at these meetings because of input from our members in SIG schools. The SEA Board of Directors reviewed a draft of the MOU and their recommendations we also incorporated into the final draft. At the April 12th SEA Board of Directors meeting a recommendation to support the MOU was approved. Last night, April 19th, the SEA RA reviewed the final proposal and debated whether or not to approve the MOU. The final decision was to approve the MOU. While it is apparent there are still concerns about certain line items that allow for further negotiations, the SEA is committed to supporting our colleagues in the SIG schools by supporting the values you have told the SEA are important.

Our members values of importance:

- We know from research and experience that collaboration positively impacts student achievement. Competition among staff will not be helpful.
- Students are more than test scores. Assessing their progress is a complicated process that should be informed by multiple measures.
- In order to effectively use data, planned collaboration time is essential.
- The design of the school improvement will be most effective if it is designed by those who know and work with the students, rather than a model that is imposed from outside.

I want to thank all our members involved with the negotiations, and the Association Representatives who diligently sought answers to questions and the thoughtful debate that ensued. Often, difficult decisions are required of us. Thank you all for upholding the democratic process and collective bargaining.

Sincerely,

Olga M. Addae
SEA President