



**Labor in School:  
Teach our**



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MLK Labor**



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**MARCH / APRIL 2019**

# SUB<sup>o</sup>VOICE

## Press Olympia for Fully Funded Schools



*Peter Henry lobbying in Olympia for the Subs:*

*"February, despite Snowmageddon, is lobbying month. I called my 21st District Representatives (Lilan Ortiz-Self and Strom Peterson) and my Senator, Marko Liias. I also met with 46th District Rep. Gerry Pollet, who is an expert on Special Education funding. On WEA lobby day (Feb. 18) I joined over a hundred educators from around the state in Olympia, including over a dozen from the SEA. We heard from Lt. Gov. Cyrus Habib and met with local area legislators. I met with aides for Reps. Cindy Ryu and Lauren Davis and Sen. Jesse Salomon from the 32nd District."*

*By Peter Henry, President of Seattle Substitutes Association*

I focused on substitute issues and funding:

### Healthcare for Subs

Currently in Seattle, even if you sub for an entire year in the same position, you only receive ten months of health coverage. Daily subs get nothing. But under the new SEBB (School Employees Benefits Board) law passed last year, school employees – including subs – who work at least 630 hours per year for a single school district will be eligible for a full year of health coverage. The legislature is still looking for funding for this law, and I reminded legislators that subs are the forgotten educators. We need health care the same as everyone else, and the budget needs to include us.

### Sick Leave

Starting last January, all subs accrue sick leave, at a minimum rate of 1 hour per 40 hours worked. The problem is, how to access it when you need it. We successfully negotiated this for Seattle – we can use it whether or not we are in a job, including if we preschedule a doctor's appointment. But subs in the rest of the state need to be in a specific job before they can claim sick leave. I explained to the legislators that this makes no sense.

### Dear Educators,

With proposed cuts to librarians, assistant principals, and more due to lack of progressive funding the picture might look gloomy to some for the future of schools in Seattle. But in order to get a better sense of what is possible, we need to zoom out to see what's happening across the country.

Close observers will remember the red state revolt of educators that swept West Virginia, Oklahoma, and Arizona last year. This #RedForEd movement has continued into blue states like Colorado and California.

In LA, educators went to battle against charter school billionaires and they won! After a week-long strike, educators came away with a slew of victories including a moratorium on charter schools, a nurse in every school building, a pay raise, and immigrant legal defense funds.

In Oakland, educators had real victories coming out of their seven day strike. They won smaller class sizes and an 11 percent pay increase. Though looking at only a five month moratorium on school closures, it's obvious that the fight isn't over and more struggle lies ahead.

In Seattle, educators, students, and families are facing serious challenges. But there is hope. **Activists are organizing in the community group Against Cuts and Displacements of Communities (ACDC)** to stop coming cuts and fight for progressive taxes. Join the facebook group to get involved: [tinyurl.com/acdcCampaign](https://tinyurl.com/acdcCampaign)

*In Solidarity,  
Stan Strasner, Seattle Substitute  
Association Vice President*

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# Subs 101

## Non-Emergency Head Injuries

By David Posner

Head injury form available online - Join the Sub Facebook group to find a link and more!

"ALL school staff should be aware that a student with ANY head bump is sent to the nurse/office" according to Marie DeBell, SPS's Manager of Health Services/Nursing.

If a student reports a head injury, or you witness one, send them to the office for observation, and treatment, if necessary, by the school nurse or designated personnel. Note, includes being hit in the head by a ball. We should use our own judgment about whether to send the student alone or with a companion. There may seem to be a gray area when it's a superficial injury rather than a bump, but several nurses have told me they do want to see students with ANY form of head injury; we can't go wrong playing it safe.

**NOTE: This policy addresses Non-Emergency Head Injuries; use your professional judgment if you feel the injury is severe enough to warrant a 911 call.**

Here, [tinyurl.com/y94z22o6](http://tinyurl.com/y94z22o6) ◀, is a link to the district's Non-Emergency Head Injury Form, which outlines the steps that are taken once a student is seen by nurse or designated staff, including at least 15 minutes of observation. I am providing the link in case you want to know what steps are taken when a student is sent to the nurse/office. We are not able, nor expected, to do the things outlined on the form, including parent/guardian notification.

It will encourage subs to take a job and then immediately cancel it because they are sick. This creates confusion and makes it more difficult for the position to be filled. Some legislators promised to follow up with the Department of Labor and Industries.

## Family Leave for Subs

Finally, the state passed a law last year to create paid family/medical leave. Starting this January, a small amount is deducted from each paycheck. Starting next year if there's a qualifying event, employees are eligible for paid leave for a number of weeks. The pay depends on the average amount that was earned over a qualifying period. I wanted to verify that subs would be covered and I found out that we will. Subs are covered even if they work for multiple districts.

## »Levy Lid«

Please make plans to attend your district legislators' town hall meetings and press them to solve the school funding crisis. All McCleary did was kick the can down the road, and we need short-term and sustainable sources of funding.

The immediate problem is the "Levy Lid." The legislature reduced the amount that local districts can raise to support schools. This is a body blow to Seattle, and we need the legislature to allow us to collect more money. Please advocate for Senate Bill SB5313, which would allow us to collect more money right away and would help next year's budget crisis.

We need an equitable tax system in Washington where the tax burden is increased for those who can afford it, and there is relief for people who are struggling to survive.



A good start is a progressive capital gains tax which Governor Inslee has proposed. It exempts personal residences and retirement accounts. There already exists an excise tax (sales tax) whenever a house is sold. The Governor's proposal would modify this by decreasing the rate for the first few hundred thousand dollars of the sales price and increase the rate for McMansions. Please advocate to support Governor Inslee's proposals.

We can all complain, but collective action is what's necessary to get what we need – fully funded schools!

## We represent YOU!

### SSA Board:

Peter Henry, *President*, Stan Strasner, *Vice President*, Elizabeth Lavaris, *Secretary*, Joyce McDonald, *Treasurer & Membership*, Jan Bowersox, *Professional Development*, Justin Vinson, *At Large SEA Board Member*, David Posner, *District Liaison*, Karin Engstrom, *Communications*, Pat Robertson, *Past President*

### Association Reps for 2018-19 (to date):

Darrin Hoop, Karen Jackson, Matt Maley, Rickie Malone, Mary (Molly) O'Neil, Ida Ott, Whitney Parker Kahn, Karen Ritter, Edith Ruby, Antonija Ventenbergs, Francisca Zavala

**Sub Voice Editor:** Stan Strasner

**Contact us:** [seattlesubs@gmail.com](mailto:seattlesubs@gmail.com)

# Life Lessons in Solidarity

By Patricia Robertson, former president of the Sub Association

We were shopping in an Albertson's recently, and my husband, who earned his way through college working for Safeway, asked the young clerk who was bagging our groceries, "What local of the retail clerks union are you a member of?" She looked at him blankly and blurted out something about how they all start out at a certain level and work their way up. It was clear that she had absolutely no idea what he was talking about.

Our young people need to be introduced to the history of unions, and this should be done in school. I doubt that it is discussed much in many history or government classes, and this is a problem for workers today, most of whom are not in a union and don't understand the importance of worker solidarity to the maintenance of a middle class in America.

As a substitute, consider developing a short lesson or series of lessons on the rise of the labor movement as a "filler" when no lesson plans are available. A classroom discussion on the role of unions in the emergence of living-wage jobs and reasonable work hours would benefit all students as they approach their working years. Having a sense of



the importance of unity with their fellow workers and the power of collective negotiation will help them think about a work life that can be rewarding and satisfying. They don't have to feel that they are on their own. Even for those that enter the workforce in a non-union job, that seed of knowledge about the value of solidarity will have been planted.

If not now, do this next fall, right after Labor Day!

**Here are some links to get started:**

[unionplus.org/page/labor-day-history](http://unionplus.org/page/labor-day-history)

EPI: [tinyurl.com/y9jza5ga](http://tinyurl.com/y9jza5ga)

[tolerance.org/classroom-resources/tolerance-lessons/labor-matters](http://tolerance.org/classroom-resources/tolerance-lessons/labor-matters)

[loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/labor/](http://loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/lessons/labor/)



### School nurses big demands: Adequate staffing and duty-free lunch breaks

By Alison Klauser Enochs, Nurse

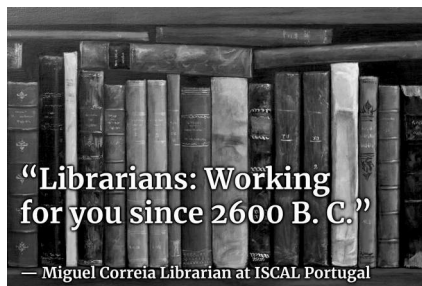
As SEA begins bargaining in April, subs should get educated about what issues other sections of the union facing. As a step in that direction, here is an overview from Alison Klauser Enochs, a nurse and SEA member.

In all 102 Seattle Public Schools, only 9 schools have been allocated full-time nurses (all comprehensive high schools and Interagency) funded primarily through WSS. All middle schools and most K-8s (19 in total) are given 0.5 FTE nurses (73% with 0.4 FTE or lower).

In the last bargain, we obtained a clarification that the additional 1 FTE per year is actually supposed be added every year (they had been giving us the same 1 FTE for 5 years) to lower our ratio toward 1:1000 (recommended national school nurse organization is 1:750 for students who don't require beyond basic health care at school). Now our basic ratio (with the additional 6 FTE this year) is 1:1107. If we continue at the same rate (additional 1 FTE per year) it will take us until 2024-25 to reach the inadequate 1:1000.

In schools where a full-time nurse is required due to the student medical needs (Level B), nurses often do not get a duty-free lunch as only nurse at school.

UTLA (Los Angeles) just went on strike and won with full-time nurses as one of their top issues and now Oakland is doing the same. In order to win, Seattle needs to organize now!



## Librarians: No Cuts!

# Unimaginable

*By Jeff Treistman, librarian and SEA rep*

In our district over the past year we have librarians who have raised tens of thousands of dollars for their school libraries. TuesD Chambers at Ballard HS won a \$100,000 grant for her school library. Yet she is about to be cut.

School Board director Leslie Harris responded to my plea for more money with a terse “let me know when you find it”. But I was able to raise \$20,000 in cash and \$20,000 in donated books for the Home Library Project. Librarians shouldn’t have to be spending time raising money. We seriously have better things to do.

For teachers, having a school librarian means having a colleague who is focused on supporting the work being done in the classroom. A qualified school librarian ensures better curriculum planning and content delivery.

For students, librarians help them get more engaged in curriculum and they provide independent learning opportunities to meet individual student needs. It’s a unique role that pays enormous dividends.

Librarians support the entire school. The longer librarians are in a building the more valuable they become. Can you imagine cutting the principal to half-time? The same is unimaginable for the school librarian.

## To be continued: Our Campaign

# Healthcare For Subs

By Toby de Luca, Certificated Substitute  
**Substitutes got organized this past summer and to launch the Healthcare For Subs Campaign. This was a grassroots effort to win healthcare for ALL educators.**

What Subs were seeing was crystal clear - the only pathway for Subs obtaining health benefits was by taking a long-term position for 60 consecutive days.

This means first: taking a long-term position does NOT guarantee healthcare benefits. It is up to the school, not the sub, to determine to stay the 60 days. If subs were dismissed on the 59th day, the school avoided having to pay benefits.

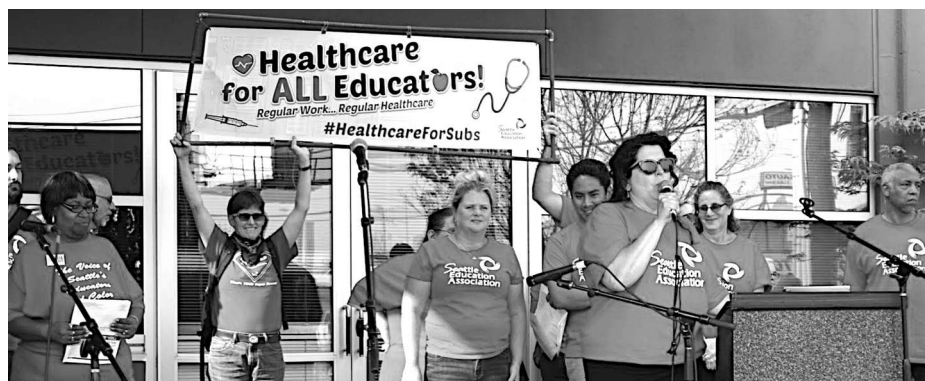
Second, if all Subs were to take long-term positions, or even permanent positions, in order to get healthcare, what would happen to all the daily subs that the school district depends on to fill in for fellow educators? The school district cannot function without daily Subs and they deserve a pathway to benefits for time worked in the school district, not at single schools.

In our efforts to organize, we held organizing meetings as well as phonebanks where we called over 1,000 Subs. When I spoke with fellow subs, they expressed concern for not knowing if they could continue being substitutes because of the

absence of healthcare. They also mentioned the inherent shame they felt about being professionals (going into horrific student loan debt in the process) and having to tell people that they do not get benefits. One person mentioned the hypocrisy of working in a profession that is rated number one, even above doctors and nurses, as the highest risk for germs and pathogens, putting themselves at risk every day without a basic safety net. How is this legal?

We stood outside of the school district office with our signs to greet the school board members as they entered the building for negotiations. Subs went into the bargaining room to tell their stories. Over 500 educators rallied outside of the John Stanford Center during a secret board meeting.

Unfortunately, in the end, we did NOT win healthcare for daily Subs. But we DID succeed in reducing the number of days subs have to work in one position to get health care down to 45 and we made huge steps forward in community building, organizing, and getting our voices heard. Moving forward, we will continue to stand together and bring the community with us as we take this fight to Olympia and urge our Senators and State Representatives to fully fund Education in the State of Washington.



# Increasing Students' Voice

By Karin Engstrom, Paraeducator Sub and SEA rep

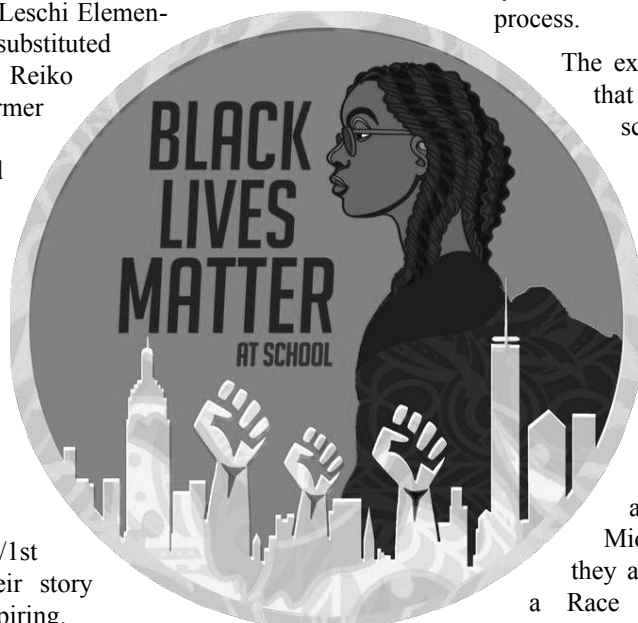
WEA held a statewide Advocating for Safety in Our Schools conference with an incredible list of workshops to choose from. Here is a report from the workshop on "Increasing Student Voice":

Was I surprised when I came into my morning workshop and recognized three people from Leschi Elementary where I substituted last year: Reiko Dabney, former Paraprofessional and now our Uniserv Representative, Gerald Donaldson, Family Support Worker and Danielle Woods, Kindergarten/1st Grade. Their story was most inspiring.

Three years ago, they decided that there should be more student voice at the school and designed a unique way to institute voice by having students create a Race and Equity Team. They received support from the staff and proceeded to work with students.

Students decided that the team would be made up of students from all grades. They would be chosen by submissions with no names in the form of written essays, drawings, or recorded words/music. Each grade level chose their representative(s) from these submissions.

The first team began designing what issues they needed to address and how the team would work together. It was all student led with Reiko, Gerald and Danielle facilitating. Out of this came many ideas and changes. They meet with the staff about issues that concern them. They think of ways problems can be solved. They contribute to their school community. It is an evolving process.



The exciting part is that other schools are inquiring about this student led process and now that students who participated in this process are going into Middle School, they are asking for a Race and Equity

Team in their new community. Hopefully, this effort will grow from the ground up.

We were provided with a long list of resources and articles on why student voice is about learning as an engaged partner in their educational process. I will go back to Leschi to sub! Last year I nominated the school as Substitute Friendly, but little did I know what the staff was doing to improve their school environment.

Thank you, Reiko, Gerald and Danielle. This seed will grow and flower.

## Fighting Sexual Harassment

A Report By Justin Vinson, Delegate for SEA at the MLK Labour Council

The first meeting of the Martin Luther King County Labor Council, our local AFL-CIO chapter, in 2019 focused on a workshop to raise awareness about sexual harassment in the workplace led by our new Ombuds- Sam, Mandy, and Zenia.

The presentation focused on the image of an iceberg to draw the analogy that there are forms of sexual harassment and assault that are easy to identify (above the water line) but that most of the sexual harassment and assault experienced by workers is harder to identify (existing below the water line).

For example, unwanted touching and promises of professional rewards in exchange for sexual favors would live above the water line but belittling jokes, vulgar name calling, obscene gestures, or unwanted discussions about sex would live below the water line. Sexual harassment occurs with men and women but is much more common for women.

The most common jobs where workers experience sexual harassment include: male dominated fields, work for tips, jobs with significant power differentials, jobs with mostly immigrants, and jobs that involve isolated contexts. We ended the workshop with public comment on what action to take if you witness harassment. Some suggestions included:

- Making the harasser uncomfortable about their behavior.
- Get the union involved.
- All employees standing up together and calling out harassment.
- The question was asked: What good it is putting the onus on employees to change the culture of harassment when in fact it's the employer who has more power than any victim.

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## SUBSTITUTES SERVING SEATTLE SCHOOL STAFF & STUDENTS

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/SEATTLESUBS](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/SEATTLESUBS)

# SUB<sup>o</sup>VOICE

### SSA General Meeting: Wed, 3/27, 4.30pm

at Seattle Vocational Institute – SVI,  
2120 S. Jackson Street, Seattle, WA  
98144

4:30pm Light supper

5:00pm Selection of Substitute Friendly  
School Recognition from SSA  
members' nominations.

6:00pm General Meeting

#### Please RSVP:

[goo.gl/forms/jQfOpeu3kebREkmD3](http://goo.gl/forms/jQfOpeu3kebREkmD3)

Mark your calendar: **Next Subs meetings are April 24 and June 10**, 4.30pm  
at Seattle Vocational Institute



Against Cuts & Displacements of Communities (AC-DC) is a group that has organized a campaign to get your colleagues, friends and family to ask their representatives to fully fund our school districts to prevent cuts to our schools.

**March 22:** Send postcards to your state legislators

**March 29:** Join the rally at 4pm at schools or at Franklin HS (MLK & Rainier)

**April 2:** Support the Librarian walkout – there will be teach ins and other actions.

Go to: [tinyurl.com/yykzb72m](http://tinyurl.com/yykzb72m)

### Support your local school librarian – and many other staff

If you Google “2019-20 school budget cuts in the Northwest”, you’ll get a long list of articles about school districts cutting many classified staff to balance the budget.

Attend a Seattle School Board Meeting – sign up to speak the Monday before the meeting: call 206-252-0040 or email [boardagenda@seattleschools.org](mailto:boardagenda@seattleschools.org)  
Here are the dates:

**Wed, 3/27 – Wed, 4/17 – Wed, 5/1**