

The SCEA Connection

Stanwood-Camano Education Association

P.O. Box 506 Stanwood, WA 98292 www.whidbey.net/sea/

November Rep. Council Highlights:

(Your SCEA Building Reps. can give you more details about these and other November meeting topics...)

- Mike Smolko, our representative from **VEBA**, came to talk about VEBA and answer questions.
- Phil Becker, our UniServ Representative, answered questions about **member representation** and advocacy.
- Rep. Council discussed the 2008-09 **SCEA budget** and received updates on a variety of SCEA-related topics including School Board happenings, Dist. Safety Committee, UniServ meetings, WEA-PAC, bargaining, and political activities.
- Rep. Council considered a **sponsorship request** from the **Hi-Q** Regional Coordinator in support of the regional Hi-Q program.

My administrator wants to meet with me.

Should I call my Building Rep?

Representation is strongly advised in any meeting with Administration that could result in disciplinary action or termination. If you meet with your administrator and the discussion starts to go that direction, you have the right to stop the meeting and have your SCEA Building Rep. present. These rights are called **Weingarten Rights**. If you find yourself in that situation, you can say:

“If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that my SCEA Representative be present at this meeting. Without representation, I will attend the meeting and follow lawful orders, but I choose not to answer any questions.”

Under Section 4.3 (Disciplinary Cause) of our Collective Bargaining Agreement, the administrator must give ample time (24 hours) for the representative to appear.

If you are being accused of a crime, contact your Building Rep. immediately.

BARGAINING PREP: Stay in the loop!

As bargaining season begins, the more ways we can get in touch with you the better. We don't want any members to be left out of the communications loop. Please get the following information to your Building Rep./BAT member ASAP, either by filling out and returning this form or by sending the info. via email.

Name _____ School _____ Home ph. _____

Cell ph. _____ Non-school email _____

WEA-PAC
Did you Know?

SCEA and Politics... What's the Connection?

The political season has prompted more than one SCEA member to question what we're doing engaging in state and federal politics. Why are we promoting a particular candidate over another, let alone encouraging members to volunteer in activities that may help those candidates get elected?

Some disagree with which candidates WEA and/or NEA endorsed. To those people I say, it's O.K. It's true that with 81,000 WEA members (and even with 304 SCEA members), we're not going to agree on everything. But keep in mind that the decision about who to endorse is a member-inclusive, non-partisan process that focuses on education-related issues. The majority of members who took part in the process agreed, and endorsed candidates are from both the Democratic and Republican parties. If it is something you would like to have more of a say in, join WEA-PAC and get involved. And also remember that regardless of who WEA and NEA endorse, each person maintains the individual right to vote on Election Day.

Some simply think we should just not be involved in politics at all. We are educators, not politicians. We have no place weighing in on who is elected. To those people, I say think about this: Every single dollar that goes to education is the result of a political decision. From your salary and benefits to the school lunch program to curriculum decisions to WASL testing to how many students are in your class. Whether it's the President of the United States, the Governor, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, a State Legislator or a local School Board member, elected politicians are making decisions that directly impact your daily life as an educator.

I believe it is not only our right to be part of the political process, but it is our absolute obligation to do so. Too much is at stake to sit back and be silent. I want the people making those decisions to be those who understand and care about public education, and I want our elected officials to hear from educators regarding decisions that impact education – before, while, and after the decisions are made. The best way I know of to do that is to get involved. Participate in emailing legislators when the opportunity arises. I've found that they really do want to hear from us about education issues (but don't use your school computer to do so...!). Who better to give feedback than those who are working with students every day? Join WEA-PAC. Those dollars (only \$2.25/month directly from your paycheck) go directly to supporting candidates who are friends of public education. Join WEA's Our Voice Action Team at www.ourvoicewashingtonea.org and receive timely information on other ways you can get involved. One last note – I never imagined I would be here encouraging political involvement. Until about 5 years into teaching, I had absolutely no interest in politics, let alone in talking to others about it. Now that I see the connection, though, I will continue to be involved and encourage others to do the same. I hope you will too.

- Nyda Smith

Thank you!

Several SCEA members helped make phone calls in WEA's effort to re-elect Gov. Gregoire. Thanks to **Tessa Karlberg, Cathy Gilbert, Katie Farrey, Lara Brown, Michelle Freedman** and **Shari Ludden** for looking out for public education!