

Tumwater Education Association

ADVOCATE

TumwaterEA.org

December 2024



Here is a [flyer](#) about our Peer Support Program. If you would like to apply to have a peer mentor, please complete an [application](#) and call Jeannette Lael at 360-943-1776 for further instructions or email at JLael@washingtonea.org.
SOURCE: WEA CHINOOK

WEA Chinook Uniserv Peer Support Program

MENTEES AND MENTORS NEEDED

Colleague-to-colleague professional advice can strengthen and improve the performance of education professionals. That is why WEA Chinook offers a peer mentoring program tailored to suit individual member needs.

The goal of the Peer Support Program is to assist members in improving their professional skills. Peer mentors use a formative growth process and provide confidential support.

Individual professional development activities provided through WEA Chinook have helped members experience greater success over the past decade. Self-referral to this program is common. However, some individuals need encouragement from co-workers to participate.

If you or someone you know is interested in collaborating with a peer mentor to improve professional practices, the WEA Chinook Peer Support Program is a fantastic opportunity to learn from your colleagues and grow professionally.

It does not matter if you are just starting your career in education or if you are an experienced veteran. Peer Support Program assistance is available to all Tumwater Education Association members unless they are on probation.

If members anticipate being placed on probation, they should seek advocacy assistance from the Tumwater Education Association President and WEA Chinook Uniserv representative.

How do I get started? Do you want to improve your professional practices or expand your current content knowledge? Would you like to receive help and advice from a fellow practitioner on classroom management, special education issues, time management, or professional organization skills? Would you like to improve your skills in an area where you have experienced challenges? The WEA Chinook Peer Support Program is for you.

SOURCE: WEA CHINOOK

President's Corner

Would you like to serve on a Tumwater Education Association committee? Committee representation is vital to our collective voice as we adhere to the democratic processes of our Mission Statement, Constitution, Bylaws, Policies, and Procedures.

The Association is currently seeking one committee chairperson each for the Nominations & Elections and Political Action committees.

“Committees are authorized by the Bylaws. Special committees may be established by the Executive Board and/or Representative Council. Committee members shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the Executive Board and/or Representative Council. Committee members shall serve for one year or until discharged by the President with the approval of the Executive Board and/or Representative Council.”



The committee chairperson must be a Tumwater Education Association member in good standing, must be able and willing to fulfill the duties of the role, and must be an outstanding communicator with demonstrated leadership ability.

Please contact me if you meet these requirements and would like to chair the Nominations & Elections or Political Action committees.

DJ



Peer mentors help members improve their professional skills to make working in today's educational world a successful and rewarding experience. Members can take advantage of the Peer Support Program through confidential self-referral. SOURCE: WEA CHINOOK

WEA Chinook Uniserv Peer Support Program

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Request an application from WEA Chinook or your Tumwater Education Association President. A Peer Support Program committee member will interview the applicant to select an appropriate mentor match.

The applicant and mentor will determine how to best proceed based on the applicant's identified needs. Regular updates will be provided to the Peer Support Program committee throughout the process. Program support is provided with competence, compassion, and confidentiality.

If you feel you would benefit from peer mentoring, please reach out for more information about the program. Tumwater Education Association members have benefited greatly.

The Peer Support Committee is also looking for educators to become mentors. WEA Chinook establishes a cadre of exceptional educators to become peer mentors. If you are well respected by your colleagues, have exceptional communication skills, and are willing to collaborate with another educator outside of your own district, then WEA Chinook would like to hear from you.

WEA Chinook will pay for release time to observe and support your mentee educator if you decide to become a mentor. Mileage is also covered. Peer Support Program mentors also receive an annual \$500 stipend at the end of the school year. Interested in becoming a mentor? Contact Nancy Herzog at nlouiseherzog@gmail.com.

SOURCE: WEA CHINOOK

ESA Advisory Group

Tumwater Education Association has formed an Educational Staff Associate (ESA) advisory group to help the bargaining team determine how ESAs should be evaluated in the Tumwater School District. ESAs are not evaluated through the TPEP Danielson framework. ESAs include the follow professionals:

- Counselors
- Occupational Therapists
- Physical Therapists
- Psychologists
- School Nurses
- Speech Language Pathologists

The Association and District were patiently waiting for OSPI and ESD 113 to develop performance evaluation template forms and procedures. OSPI and ESD 113 now take the position that performance evaluation forms and procedures are a local decision for each bargaining unit. The decision now rests with the Association bargaining team to develop proposed contract language for ESA performance evaluation forms and procedures.

The ESA advisory group members are Anna Bush, Rick Coate, Claire Runge, and DJ Brimer. The group meets once quarterly to review existing contract language, discuss comparable contract language, and determine proposed contract language for the bargaining team. Our next bargain takes place in 2025.

Highly Capable Program Cluster Model Elementary schools now offererong clustered services K-5



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)

Tumwater School District is required by OSPI to offer a highly capable program for students. The District website states "We offer a highly capable program which provides selected kindergarten through twelfth

OSPI Highly Capable Program Info

grade students access to a basic education program that accelerates learning and enhances instruction. A highly capable student is one who has been shown to have superior cognitive abilities, specific academic achievement, or exceptional creativity." The District offers a self-contained program at Michael T. Simmons Elementary for students in grades four and five. The District is now also offering a "cluster model" of grades K-5 highly capable program services at all elementary schools. In the cluster model, identified students in grades K-5 are clustered together in one or more classrooms at each

elementary school. Cluster sizes vary based on the total number of identified students, with potential for multi-age classrooms when needed. Within the classroom, highly capable students are regrouped as a cluster for enriched instruction in ELA and/or Math, interacting with peers of similar abilities. Students can explore content more deeply on an as-needed basis, with opportunities that may be skill specific. Highly capable students, often referred to as HiCap students, are those who demonstrate exceptional abilities or potential in intellectual, creative, artistic, or leadership capacities.

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“Washington's Highly Capable Program is a component of the state's program of basic education. School districts provide instruction, activities, and services that accelerate learning for young learners identified as Highly Capable. Districts must define an educational program for Highly Capable students and comply with specific program-related provisions that will deliver a comprehensive and equitable education.” SOURCE: OSPI

Highly Capable Program Cluster Model

Elementary schools now offering clustered services K-5

These students typically perform significantly above grade level in one or more areas and require advanced educational experiences to meet their unique needs. Identification of HiCap students may involve a combination of standardized assessments, teacher recommendations, and parent input. Tumwater Education Association established a new MOU for the HiCap cluster model with the District, which outlines the role of teachers to provide differentiated instruction and regular communication. The MOU also requires the District to provide professional development within the HiCap PLC and from ESD 113 HiCap experts in the field. The MOU provides a formal definition of the cluster model while outlining the key features for grouping, tailored instruction, and inclusive environment.

In addition, the MOU states the parameters for cluster model teaching assignments. “The right of first refusal in accepting or rejecting a cluster model teaching assignment shall be based upon seniority within the grade bands affected.” The MOU also states, “no teacher shall be required to teach a cluster model classroom for two consecutive years.” The MOU serves as a framework for understanding and implementing the education of HiCap students within the cluster model. By adhering to these definitions and expectations, we aim to provide a supportive and enriching learning environment for all students while also defining the parameters for teachers. The MOU is effective for the current 2024-25 school year as the District implements the new program. We will bargain more specific contract language in 2025.

Weingarten Rights



Have you been told by a building or District administrator that you are being investigated?
Have you been told by a building or District administrator that you are being interviewed as a witness for an ongoing investigation?



Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) protects employees’ right to “self-organization, to form, join, or assist labor organizations, to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing, and to engage in other concerted activities for the purpose of collective bargaining or other mutual aid and protection.” Among the rights protected by Section 7 is the right of employees, upon request, to have their representative present during an interview that the employee reasonably believes could lead to discipline. This right was first articulated by the Supreme Court in the case, NLRB v. J. Weingarten, Inc. In that case, the Court found that Section 7 of the NLRA protects employees who refuse to submit to certain interviews without a requested representative present.

An employee’s requested representative, which may be a union steward, business agent or officer, or fellow employee, is often referred to as a “Weingarten representative.” Weingarten representatives are entitled to provide advice and active assistance to employees during investigatory interviews. Employees’ right to request their representatives are frequently referred to as “Weingarten rights.” Employers violate the NLRA if they proceed with an investigatory interview while refusing an employee’s request or retaliate against them for making the request. Depending on the circumstances of each case, the Board may order that the employer cease and desist, post a remedial notice, require the employer to repeat the interview with a union member present, or rescind and remedy discipline.

SOURCE: NLRB



Do I have to respond to the jury summons? RCW 2.36.170 states, "A person summoned for jury service who intentionally fails to appear as directed shall be guilty of a misdemeanor." Please respond to your summons. The justice system in Washington State cannot function without citizens willing to serve on jury duty. As one juror said, "if everyone tried to dodge jury duty, then what?" SOURCE: THURSTON DISTRICT COURT

Jury Duty and Court Witness Leave

Employees not required to complete the contracted day

WHAT DOES OUR CONTRACT SAY?

“Leave will be granted to employees to serve as jurors and subpoena witnesses. Regular salary will be paid, provided, the employee provides documentation of dates of jury service. If documentation of jury service is not provided, the employee's personal leave shall be used to the extent available to maintain the employee's regular salary; thereafter, undocumented jury service shall be treated as unpaid leave. Any reimbursement of expenses received by the employee for jury service shall be retained by the employee with no adjustment to district compensation. Prior to the District's substituting Personal Leave or unpaid leave for undocumented jury service leave, the District shall notify the employee of its intent to do so, giving the employee sufficient time to secure the necessary documentation of dates of service.”

Have you been summoned for jury duty? Trial by jury is a right guaranteed by the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Washington. First, your name was selected at random from voter registration and driver's license and "identocard" records. Then, your answers to the juror questionnaire were evaluated to make sure you were eligible for jury service. You were chosen because you are eligible and able to serve. You are now part of the "jury pool" — a group of citizens from which trial juries are chosen. To be eligible for jury service, you must be at least 18 years of age, a citizen of the United States, a resident of the county in which you are to serve as a juror, and you must be able to communicate in English.

SOURCE: THURSTON DISTRICT COURT

Washington law says employers, "shall provide an employee with sufficient leave of absence from employment when that employee is summoned" for jury duty. It also says employers, "shall not deprive an employee of employment or threaten, coerce, or harass an employee or deny an employee promotional opportunities" for serving as a juror.



Our contract is clear that “regular salary will be paid” when employees are summoned for jury duty. The District cannot charge personal leave for jury duty when the employees “provide documentation of the dates of jury service.” The District also cannot direct employees to return to work for the remainder of the contracted day when employees are released early on that day from jury service. Thank you for your civil service on jury duty.