

BIESPA News Briefs

From your union, **Bainbridge Island Educational Support Professional Association**

BLDG. REPS. -- PLEASE MAKE SURE THIS GETS TO PEOPLE WITHOUT E-MAIL ACCESS

This report includes actions your union has taken from **June 3 – July 15, 2011**

Fri. 6/3 – The **Co-Presidents attended the monthly BISD / BIESPA meeting** with Cami Dombkowski and Peter Bang-Knudsen. The most important issue discussed was the budget cuts coming from the state and options for dealing with them.

Mon. 6/6 -- Carrie Shipp, Stacie Boyd and Cathi Holliday attended the Olympic UniServ Rep. Council meeting. There was talk of different actions including a **possible "day of action"** to make educators (including classified!) more visible to their communities. We hope BIESPA and BIEA will be able to work more closely in future.

Mon. 6/6 – Co-Pres., Mike McCloud, and Treasurer, Lisa Draper met to prepare financial reports required by the WEA.

Tues. 6/7 – Dave Flieder, Sandy Van Eps and Mike McCloud attended the **final DBAC meeting of the year**. The good news is that the Bainbridge Schools Foundation (BSF) has increased its goal for this year from \$500,000 to \$575,000. The bad news is that the state has imposed an additional 1.9% cut on classified and certificated funding and a 3% cut on administrators. There was also concern about cuts to programs, including the Alternative Learning Education (ALE) program, based at Commodore.

Mon. 6/13 – A General Membership meeting was held to discuss the latest 1.9% cut imposed by Wash. State. Cami Dombkowski and Peter Bang-Knudsen represented BISD to provide information and answer questions. 20 BIESPA members and Cristi McCorkle, our UniServ Rep. attended. **About ¾ of those present favored sticking to our contract** and asking the district to use money from the Foundation to bridge the \$35,000-\$50,000 cut in state funding for classified employees.

Wed. 6/15 – The Exec. Board met. **BIESPA's finances continue to shrink**. Despite very frugal use of our funds, for the 4th year in a row, our account balance at year-end will be lower than the year before. It was decided that BIESPA would not accept cuts in pay or further cuts in hours and staffing as a result of the latest 1.9% cuts.

Thurs. 6/16 – Co-Presidents, Lydia and Mike, met with Cami and Peter and **strongly lobbied for no cuts in pay or staffing**. They said Foundation funds should be used to preserve classified pay and hours. Cami and Peter were able to give the good news that state "Safety Net" dollars (a type of Special Ed. Funding) came in at \$500,00 (well above the \$300,000 that had been hoped for).

Tues. 6/21 – Mike and Lydia met again with the District representatives. Cami and Peter said they were pleased to be able to tell us that **BISD had decided it would not impose any further cuts on classified staff rates of pay or hours** as a result of the most recent 1.9% cuts. This was a big victory for us! However, other cuts, already recommended by DBAC in response to cuts in state funding, enrollment decreases and changes in student needs, will go forward. It is hoped that resignations and retirements will lessen the impact of these cuts. Unfortunately, a 15% state cut in the Alternative Learning Ed. Program funds will result in the loss of an additional 3 hours per day of paraeducator time at Commodore.

Thurs. 6/23 – Treasurer Lisa Draper negotiated with Columbia Bank to remove the recently imposed \$3 per month service charge on our BIESPA account and reimburse us for fees paid earlier in the year. Lisa's **action will save BIESPA \$36 per year.**

Thurs. 6/30 -- Mike and Lydia met to complete budget and hours reports for WEA on the 2009-2010 School year. Between the two of them, our **Co-Presidents put in over 700 hours on union business.** That includes advocating for members, assisting members facing discipline, answering questions and providing information, resolving complaints, organizing and holding meetings and bargaining our contract. 700 hours is equivalent to 14 weeks of full-time work.

Mon. 7/4 – Sakai Bldg. Rep., Ailene Isaf and Co-Pres., Mike, organized a variety of BISD staff to march with the Bainbridge Schools Foundation in the **July 4th parade** to express gratitude for all the ways in which our community supports education. The BIESPA delegation included Stacie Boyd, Susan Fidelman, Steve Nielsen, Lydia Scheiber, May Sperber, Jennifer Weir and Mike McCloud. We were also able to recruit a number of our certificated colleagues and an administrator to march with us.

Sat. 7/9 – with lots of help from his son, Aaron, Mike McCloud built a **new website for BIESPA.** Check it out: **biespa.weebly.com** The website includes contact information, a calendar of events, a list of officers and building reps, a photo gallery of union activities, an archive of News Briefs and useful links to other websites. We welcome your photographs, ideas for what to include and ways to improve the website. Contact Mike with your contributions and feedback.

Fri. 7/15 – BISD H.R. Director Cami Dombkowski sent out **RIF (reduction in force) letters** to some classified members. These layoffs become effective on August 31 and affect 8 paraeducators, 2 bus drivers and one custodian. The BIESPA Co-Presidents were informed and have been contacting the affected employees and their Building Reps. to make sure they understand the recall process and to offer support.

===== END OF THE NEWS BRIEFS =====

THANKS TO OUR MEMBERS FOR THEIR SERVICE & SUPPORT IN SO MANY WAYS.