

SEE Supports Capital Gains Tax to Fund Education Statewide

(Editors' Note: SEE supports Chris Reykdal, the Washington State Schools Superintendent's, call for an 8% statewide long-term capital gains tax to fund education. It would raise an estimated \$1 billion per year with half of that money replacing property taxes in order to reduce the burden on homeowners. He argues that districts could then increase local levies if needed. While we don't believe this is a perfect long-term solution to fully funding public education, SEE encourages SEA members to support this and believes the SEA as a union should come out publicly in favor of this at the January 10 Town Hall with legislators. Below we reprint some highlights of the FAQ "Taxing Capital Gains: To Build a Better Future for Our Children" by the Washington State Budget & Policy Center.)

WHAT ARE CAPITAL GAINS?

Capital gains are profits from the sale of corporate stocks, bonds, investment property (not primary residences), and other high-end financial assets.i

WOULD THE TAX APPLY TO ALL CAPITAL GAINS?

No. The tax would only apply to capital gains in excess of \$50,000 per year for a married couple (\$25,000 for single filers).ii

WHO WOULD PAY THE TAX?

Because corporate stocks and other financial assets are heavily concentrated among those individuals at the very top of the income scale, the tax would be paid almost exclusively by the very richest Washingtonians.iii Exempting the first \$50,000 in gains from taxation ensures that middle-class households with small portfolios or savings in mutual funds would pay no additional taxes.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WOULD BE SUBJECT TO THE TAX?

Very few. The vast majority of the tax would be paid by the richest 1 percent of households in Washington state, those with incomes of at least \$490,000 per year. Among those households, state taxes would increase by 1.5 percent of annual household income, on average.iv

WHAT WOULD THE CAPITAL GAINS TAX RATE BE?

7 percent. That's lower than the combined state and local sales tax rate in many places. Under current law, working Washingtonians pay up to 9.5 percent in state sales taxes when they buy a pair of shoes, a bar of soap, and other household goods.v Yet, millionaires pay nothing when they reap huge windfalls from exclusive Wall Street investment partnerships. A state capital gains tax would help to correct that fundamental imbalance.

HOW MUCH REVENUE WOULD THE TAX GENERATE AND HOW WOULD THOSE FUNDS BE SPENT?

The tax would generate about \$800 million per year in new resources, according to the Washington State Department of Revenue.vi It is proposed that the revenue would be dedicated to improving basic education in Washington state. That's important because the State Supreme Court recently ruled that policymakers have been underfunding schools for decades. Without generating additional tax revenue, policymakers would be forced to enact deep and damaging cuts to health care, public safety, child care, higher education, and other investments that help create jobs and promote a strong state economy.

DO OTHER STATES HAVE CAPITAL GAINS TAXES?

Yes. Forty-one states tax capital gains. Fourteen states — including our neighboring states of Idaho (7.4%), Oregon (9.9%), and California (13.3%) — tax capital gains at or above the 7 percent rate proposed for Washington state.viii

ISN'T THIS AN INCOME TAX?

No. A capital gains tax is a form of "excise tax," or transactional tax under state law. Capital gains are much different than ordinary paycheck income. While wage and salary earners don't get to choose when they pay taxes on their paycheck incomes, millionaires do get to decide when they buy and sell stock and other financial assets.xiii

WOULD A CAPITAL GAINS TAX HARM WASHINGTON'S ECONOMY?

No. The tax would help grow the state economy in the long run by providing new resources for schools, worker retraining, child care, health care, and other investments proven to create jobs and foster robust growth. There is no evidence linking higher taxes on capital gains to lower economic growth.xiv, xv Nor is there any credible evidence to support the argument that the wealthy families who would pay the tax would leave Washington state as a result.xvi

Read the full report here with source citations:

<https://budgetandpolicy.org/Capital%20Gains%20Tax%20QA%20updated.pdf>

Solidarity with Acero charter school educators strike!

(Editor's Note: On December 4, some 500 educators in Chicago's Acero Schools charter network went on strike — the first strike against a charter school operator in the U.S. The striking workers are part of United Educators for Justice (UEJ), a division of the Chicago Teachers Union-Alliance of Charter Teachers and Staff (CTU-ACTS).

Meghan Thomas is a strike captain at Esmeralda Santiago Elementary in the city's Humboldt Park neighborhood. She has worked as a kindergarten teacher at the school for two years and worked at UNO (Acero's predecessor) for five years before that. She spoke to Paul D'Amato about the importance of the strike for UEJ members, their students and the wider fight for education justice.)

WHY ARE you on strike?

We are on strike because we want to have better educational systems in place for our students. We want to have culturally relevant curriculum to teach to our students. We want to make sure that we are providing all the special ed services and meeting all the special ed needs for all of our students. We want to make sure our schools are sanctuary schools and are protected from ICE.

We want to make sure that all of our office coordinators are making living wages. We want to make sure that we are able to keep all of our paraprofessionals — who are primarily people of color and women — provided with lanes of opportunity to get advanced education degrees and move into the teaching profession if that's what they want. And we also want to have sustainable wages for teachers.

I HEAR that wages are considerably lower for charter school teachers than public school teachers in Chicago.

Regretfully, yes. None of us who went into teaching wanted to become teachers to be rich and make lots of money. However, we do have families, and we do need to preserve that bottom line as well. We work significantly more than teachers in public schools — we work longer hours, have a longer school year, and we make, on average, 20 percent less than they do.

And we have larger classroom sizes. Right now, we have a classroom size of 32, but some schools have classroom sizes of up to 35. Research just does not support that as being best way to support our student's needs. So that is another thing that we're fighting for — to have smaller classroom sizes so to meet the needs of our students.

Read the full interview here:

<https://socialistworker.org/2018/12/07/well-stay-on-the-picket-line-until-we-get-it-done>

Educators' Vision

Published By the Social Equity Educators (SEE)

December 2018

A Call to Educators Stand with the Migrant Caravan!

(Editor's Note: Educators welcome all students into our rooms and we believe that our schools and classrooms should be sanctuaries from racist, anti-immigrant hate. All children deserve education, not detention. In response to the Trump administration's brutal and racist attack on the migrant caravan, Jessie Maoldúin, a teacher, wrote the following statement that over 100 educators and faculty from around the country have signed calling on educators to show their solidarity with the migrant caravan. At the December 3rd SEA Executive Session, Peter Henry presented the following New Business Item which received a recommendation of "Do Pass".)

NBI: Solidarity with Migrant Caravan by Peter Henry

Whereas, as asylum seekers from Central America are fleeing violence and want to apply for asylum in the US,

And whereas, as asylum seekers are targeted by the Trump Administration and the border patrol with teargas, by separating parents from their children, and by being racially targeted and demonized,

And whereas, as a matter of justice, all children deserve and require a quality public education,

And whereas, educators are involved in the struggle for social justice every day,

Therefore, be it resolved that the SEA expresses its solidarity with the Migrant Caravan and adds its voice to the petition, "A Call To Educators".

A Call to Educators:

2018 saw some of the biggest educators' struggles in several decades. Strikes in West Virginia, Oklahoma, Kentucky, Arizona and Washington state, and ongoing struggles in Los Angeles and Oakland have put educators at the forefront of revitalizing the labor movement. And these strikes and struggles went far beyond salaries, and took on social issues such as taxing the energy industry, classroom conditions and racial equity demands. Social justice educators know that our struggles are part of a bigger picture of fighting oppression and injustice broadly.

By now we have all seen the pictures: members of the migrant caravan, including many families, teargassed as they approach the border of the United States from Tijuana, Mexico. Thousands of Central American immigrants, mainly from El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, have been traveling to the U.S., in spite of escalating anti-immigrant rhetoric from the U.S. government. As they reached the border on Sunday, November 25, U.S. Border Patrol closed the border and launched tear gas into the crowds.

Asylum seekers fleeing oppression in countries ravaged by the legacy of U.S. imperialism are standing up against an increasingly hostile environment. President Trump has described immigrants as rapists and criminals, and has threatened to permanently close the border if the migrant caravan continues. Currently Trump is requesting \$18 billion for the border wall. In addition, overall 2019 funding for U.S. Customs and Border Protection is \$14.2 billion and \$8.3 billion for the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. It's outrageous that educators in the red states had to strike for hundreds of millions for higher salaries and school funding while the U.S. government aims to spend around \$40 billion in the next year plus to

A Call to Educators • continued on page 2

Black Lives Matter at School Week February 4-9th

(Editor's Note: SEE supports the national Black Lives Matter at School Week February 4-9th and encourages all SEA members to pledge to participate in it

this year. Most of the information below is taken from its national site: <https://blacklivesmatteratschool.com/2018/10/11/save-the-date-blm-at-school-national-week-of-action-2019-feb-4th-8th/>)

Black Lives Matter At School is a national committee of educators organizing for racial justice in education. We encourage all educators, students, parents, unions, and community organizations to join our annual week of action during the first week of February each year.

During the 2017-2018 school year, from February 5 to 9, thousands of educators around the U.S. wore Black Lives Matter shirts to school and taught lessons about structural racism, intersectional black identities, black history, and anti-racist movements for a nationally organized week of action: Black Lives Matter at School. Educators in over 20 cities participated in this national uprising to affirm the lives of Black students, teachers, and families including, Seattle, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, Chicago, Detroit, Boston, New York City, Baltimore, Washington, D.C., and beyond.

In this era of mass incarceration, there is a school-to-prison-pipeline system that is more invested in locking up youth than unlocking their minds. That system uses harsh discipline policies that push Black students out of schools at disproportionate rates; denies students the right to learn about their own cultures and whitewashes the curriculum to exclude many of the struggles and contributions of Black people and other people of color; and is pushing out Black teachers from the schools in cities around the country.

With this analysis educators in the BLM at School movement developed these demands for the movement (the first four are national demands, the last two are additional local Seattle demands):

- 1) End "zero tolerance" discipline, and implement restorative justice
- 2) Hire more black teachers
- 3) Mandate black history and ethnic studies in K-12 curriculum
- 4) Counselors not cops

Black Lives Matter at School Week • continued on page 2

Upcoming Social Equity Educator (SEE) meeting

All Seattle Education Association (SEA) members who believe in bringing social justice ideas into our classrooms and union are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Saturday January 5th at 10am-Noon

Douglass-Truth Library (2300 E Yesler Way, Seattle 98122)
<https://www.facebook.com/events/709071382811181/>

For more information check out: socialequityeducators.org

[facebook.com/socialequityeducators/](https://www.facebook.com/socialequityeducators/)

Call or text: 206.550.1609



Educators' Vision

Published By the Social Equity Educators (SEE)

SEE steering committee

Tracy Castro-Gill, Olivia Geffner, Jesse Hagopian, Darrin Hoop, Bruce Jackson, Kaitlin Kamalei Jenkins, Rosa Powers, Lauren Ware-Stark, and Justin Vinson.

Educators' Vision is a monthly newsletter of the Social Equity Educators socialequityeducators.org info@seattlesee.org

Mission

Social Equity Educators is a rank and file caucus of Seattle Education Association educators that focuses on democratic, anti-racist, and anti-oppression policies and practices in our classrooms, schools, and communities. SEE engages in local, national, and international social movements for liberation and radical change by building alliances and addressing the roots of institutional racism and other forms of injustice.

Points of Unity

- ◆ Organizing and bargaining for equity from the bottom up
- ◆ Anti-racist, anti-oppression pedagogy and practices
- ◆ Supporting social movements through community alliances
- ◆ Full and equitable funding for public education
- ◆ Opposing corporate education reform

A Call to Educators • continued from page 1

criminalize and scapegoat immigrants and asylum seekers.

There are still immigrant children in detention following Trump's policy of family separation. Nonetheless, approximately 15 women from the migrant caravan have begun a hunger strike, and it is likely this number will grow. Thousands remain in Mexico and will make their way to the border in the coming days and weeks.

As educators, we serve every student who enters our class, regardless of immigration status or nation of origin. Social justice education means that our classrooms recognize no borders, and we open our doors to the children of the migrant caravan.

We the undersigned demand that any child of school age who enters the U.S. be immediately welcomed into a public school, and not held in a detention center, or separated from their families.

Read the statement and complete list of signatories here:

<https://socialistworker.org/2018/12/05/educators-stand-with-the-caravan>

Marquita Prinzing, Seattle, Director of the Center for Race and Equity-SEA

Tracy Castro-Gill, Seattle, 2019 Washington State PSED Teacher of the Year

Lauren Ware Stark, Seattle, SEA and SEE

Brian Black, Seattle, SEA and SEE

Justin Vinson, Seattle, SEA and SEE

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Matt Carter, Seattle, SEA and SEE

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5) Fully Fund Our Schools

6.) Oppose Standardized Tests



The lessons that educators taught during that week of action corresponded to the thirteen guiding principles of Black Lives Matter:

Monday: Restorative Justice, Empathy and Loving Engagement

Tuesday: Diversity and Globalism

Wednesday: Trans-Affirming, Queer Affirming and Collective Value

Thursday: Intergenerational, Black Families and Black Villages

Friday: Black Women and Unapologetically Black

Find curriculum for the week here:

<https://blacklivesmatteratschool.com/teaching-materials/>



Encourage your students to participate in the Student Creativity Challenge:

<https://blacklivesmatteratschool.com/student-creativity-challenge/>



The Black Lives Matter at School movement first started in Seattle during the fall of 2016, when thousands of educators in Seattle came to school on October 19th wearing shirts that said, "Black Lives Matter: We Stand Together." Hundreds of families and students did too. Many of the shirts also included the message "#SayHerName," a campaign to raise awareness about the often unrecognized state violence and assault of women in our country.



This action attracted national news, helping it spread to Philadelphia. That city's Caucus of Working Educators' Racial Justice Committee expanded the action to last an entire week that year with teaching points around the principles of Black Lives Matter. Educators in Rochester, New York also held a Black Lives Matter at School day in 2017. The January issue of Educators' Vision will be mostly dedicated to further discussion of this week.



Save the Date for Key Events that Week: (specific details to be announced later)

Wednesday, February 6: Rally after school at the John Stanford Center

Friday, February 8: End of the week final rally in the evening

Educators, please sign the pledge to participate in the week:

<https://tinyurl.com/yalg7u7w>



6 Things You Need to Know about School Policing

By Alexis McKenney

(Editor's Note: In the November issue of Educators' Vision, we printed the first 3 "Things You Need to Know about School Policing" from a summary of a new report "We Came to Learn: A Call to Action for Police-Free Schools" co-written by the Alliance for Educational Justice and the Advancement Project. As Alexis McKenney describes it, the report, "Provides an evidence-based analysis that confirms the true function of school police as way to further criminalize and abuse Black and Brown youth." SEE encourages educators to read the summary and full report and join us in discussions about building a movement to eliminate police from all Seattle Public Schools.)

4)

School Police Don't Make Young People Feel Safe

Michelle Ruiz, 18, of Puente Arizona speaks to the true nature of school safety from the student perspective:

"Safety is walking into my school campus and not being watched by a police officer, waiting for me to make a mistake. Safety means having better counselors, having better support to advance my education. Safety means being welcomed and trusted. Safety means having input to decide what our schools can look like and feel like."

5)

Policing has become a Part of School Culture

We Came to Learn also highlights how teachers and administrators contribute to the culture of over-policing Black and Brown students by continuing to call officers for minor disciplinary infractions. Black youth are five times more likely to be arrested in school than their White peers which is a reality that results in instances such as South Carolina high school students, Niya and Shakara being arrested after Niya recorded a school police officer flipping Shakara over a desk and dragging her out of the classroom after she refused to give her phone to a teacher. Not only are these violent interactions happening more frequently, but school police see the increase in student arrests as a positive result which points to a complete disregard for the students they police.

6)

Students and their Communities are Fighting Back!

After the assault and arrest of Shakara went viral, the Alliance for Educational Justice (AEJ) and students from across the country mobilized to create the #AssaultAt movement which developed rapid response protocols, research, and political education to empower students and their communities to fight back against abusive policing practices in schools. Their work continues and provides an example of how students can hold their schools and local governments accountable to ensure safe school environments.

Read the full report here: <https://advancementproject.org/6-things-you-need-to-know-about-school-policing/>

Alexis McKenney is a Communications Associate at Advancement Project and community organizer based in Washington, DC. Connect with her about social justice and socialism on Twitter.

Licton Springs K-8 Parents Dismayed by Potential School Move:

PTO says children have benefited from the Native-centered program, and that transferring the pupils would disrupt their progress.

By Melissa Hellman

(Editor's Note: Below SEE reprints part of an article from the Seattle Weekly about the Seattle Public Schools proposal to evict or dismantle the Native-centered K-8 program at Licton Springs K-8 School. Social Equity Educators stands in solidarity with their struggle.)

"We're not going to move. I will sit in the unoccupied space, taking my kids and homeschooling them in that building," Licton Springs K-8 parent Allycea Weil said, standing at the head of a table in Greenwood's Razzis Pizzeria's basement. A dozen other parents at the recent Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) meeting laughed in response. "I'm not moving," Weil reiterated, punctuating their chuckles.

The Nov. 26 emergency meeting had been called to brainstorm solutions to the Native-centered school's potential closure. A few weeks beforehand, Seattle Public Schools (SPS) had released a statement about its exploration of options to address capacity issues on the campus that's shared by the option school Licton Springs K-8 and a separate middle school that hosts the district's Highly Capable Cohort program called Robert Eagle Staff. The district has cited Robert Eagle Staff Middle School as overcrowded, while Licton Springs K-8 had low enrollment in grades 6-8. In the Nov. 2 statement, the district listed potential options, including making Licton Springs a K-5 school due to the low enrollment of its middle schoolers, or to transfer the school to Ballard's Webster School building in fall 2020, although only 6 percent of the current Licton Springs students live in that area, according to the PTO.

Both schools had opened last fall in a new building constructed on a sacred Duwamish site to serve as a permanent home for Licton Springs K-8. (The Duwamish still have not been granted federal recognition as a tribe after over 150 years of attempts.) Formerly called AS-1 and Pinehurst K-8, the option school was the result of talks between Native community leaders and educators to create a Native Heritage Program. In winter 2017, the SPS School Board approved an amendment ensuring that Licton Springs would have "a permanent home (and the opportunity to grow)" in its current North Seattle building. The current location is the third building and home for the school in six years.

But two years after settling into its new location, students could once again be uprooted. Parents say the threat of moving could further marginalize a population consisting mostly of students of color. Boasting a social justice and Native-centered focus, Licton Springs K-8 consists of 61 percent students of color, with 12 percent being Native students, and 50 percent of the population on free and reduced lunch, according to the school district's October 2017 statistics. However, the PTO states that the school's indigenous population is over 22 percent when accounting for multiracial students with Native heritage who identify as Native.

Parents whose students had moved multiple times — and said that their students were able to thrive in an environment that acknowledged and taught their heritage — viewed the potential eviction as a slap in the face. The Indian Heritage High School building that's on the same land as Licton Springs and Robert Eagle Staff had been torn down after the site fell into disrepair and enrollment dwindled, according to Indian Country Today. "To move us would be history repeating itself," Weil said.

Read the full article here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7nqp46x>