Ethnic Studies Summer Institute
By Tracy Castro-Gill

Starts: Monday July 29 at 8:30am
Ends: Friday August 9 at 5:30pm
Where: John Stanford Center for Educational Excellence (2445 3rd Ave S, Seattle, WA 98134)

Course Overview
This two-week, 60-hour institute is designed to prepare educators to implement culturally responsive and critical pedagogy in teaching ethnic studies content. It is open to all educators with Seattle Public Schools full-time classroom teaching having priority registration. Content will cover ethnic studies definitions and frameworks, how to teach ethnic studies, including culturally responsive, relevant, and sustaining pedagogies and critical pedagogy. Sessions include student, parent, and anti-racist educator panels, affinity group discussions, networking opportunities, and sessions on how to create content for specific racial and ethnic groups.

Registration:
Registration is free for Seattle Public Schools employees and priority is given to currently contracted SPS classroom teacher. SPS employees should register through Employee Self Service (ESS) to receive priority registration.
Non-SPS participants register through Seattle University's College of Education Professional & Continuing Education. The registration fee is $280.00 per person.

Partnership:
• Seattle Public School’s Ethnic Studies Program
• Seattle Education Association’s Center for Racial Equity
• Seattle University’s College of Education - Professional & Continuing Education

Offers:
60 clock hours or 6 CEUs

Sign Up For Non-Sps Participants
https://seattlecollegecataloguestructure.com/browsecourses-ng19

Educators’ Vision

Published by the Social Equity Educators (SEE)

May 8th Statewide Day of Action for a Capital Gains Tax

By Whitney Kale, Pasapro substitute

“The legislature funds basic education, not perfect education,” Senator Mullet’s legislative assistant said to us as we sat in his office. I was stunned that the word “basic,” designed to mean “K-12” was being used to mean ‘substandard’. This is how the legislature views our schools. I was left thinking, ‘With Democrats like these, who need Republicans?’

We had come from all over the state in Olympia in an emergency response to two amendments to a school funding bill, made in the dead of night, which would undermine educator salaries in our demands. More of the same. Pitting the idea of education funding against living wages for educators. It felt similar to the way the legislature ‘funded’ McCleary’s last year by transferring local property taxes to statewide funds. This cynical move means insufficient gains for rural districts at the cost of cuts for urban districts. In Seattle that means hundreds of educators, counselors, and school librarians get cut. Who wins from this bad deal? Not homeowners who are further squeezed, surely not our students, but the Seattle-area millionaires and billionaires who continue to go untaxed. Washington has a tax system where the poorer you are, the higher tax rate you pay, and where if you buy school supplies you pay a sales tax, but if you buy a private jet you’re exempt. You pay taxes on your home, but none on millions made from the sale of stocks, bonds, and investment property. Changing this starts with demanding a capital gains tax to fund schools.

You don’t need to feel bad for Seattle cuts in order to demand this capital gains tax. You just need to ask if your district has a full-time nurse in every school, if your salary covers all your expenses, if you have counselors, and if your class size allows your students to flourish.

But you know what? When I heard this slimy legislation, I wasn’t worried, I wasn’t hopeless. That’s because over the past year, educators around this country have shown their power. In districts across the country, including many in Washington, educators who were on strike won big gains. Beyond that, in states like West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, and Arizona, educators have shown that statewide action can even get Republican-controlled legislatures to increase public education funding. That’s like getting a worm to do a backflip! Surely, if it can work there, it can work anywhere.

We have a big opportunity. On May 8th, at least 22 Oregon Education Association locals across Oregon will be walking out with very similar issues to what we’re facing. There will be hundreds of educator cuts because the legislature isn’t funding education (their legislature is Democrat-controlled, same as ours). SEA member and Garfield High School Teacher Rosa Powers will put forward an NBI to the WEA convention coming up in Spokane April 25-27 that I hope you’ll support. Say that you should join Oregon on May 8th with our own day of action. Locals should determine their own involvement, but we would be united in our demands:

• Lift the local levy lid for funding now
• Tax capital gains to fund education across the state
• Call a special session to make this happen now, like was done in 2013 to give Boring their record-breaking $8.7B handout

Our students deserve perfect education, and we can help make that happen.

Educators, parents, and students have launched the ‘Agustain Cuts & Displacement of Communities (ACDC) campaign to organize across the state to tax the super-wealthy to fund schools.

Sign up to get involved and stay informed at: www.TinyURL.com/ACDCCwa

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New Business Item 25: State-wide Day of Action for Full Funding

(Editors’ Note: Below is a NBI SEA member and Garfield High School Teacher Rosa Powers submitted to the WEA Representative Assembly held in Spokane April 25-27.)

Background:
Washington has dragged its feet for almost two decades in fully funding schools, and district still face deep cuts after a false fix. Meanwhile, undermining the legislature’s own efforts, educators, parents, and students have launched the ‘Agustain Cuts & Displacement of Communities (ACDC) campaign to organize across the state to tax the super-wealthy to fund schools.

WEA WIB: Demand respect for the dignity of WEA members and the families we serve by calling for and providing support to all WEA locals to participate in a state-wide day of action on Wednesday May 8th. Specific actions will be determined by locals, such as; walk-outs, walk-ins, community rallies, red for ed visual solidarity and legislative action sessions. The purpose of this state wide realization of our power is to force the legislature hold a special session expanding education funding statewide with no attacks on union rights, or concession cuts to local funding. This means immediately lifting levy lids and passing a strong capital gains tax on wealthy Washingtonians to fully fund our schools.

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. Next 2 meetings are:

• Saturday, April 20th • 10am-Noon
  Capitol Hill Library - 425 Harvard Ave E., Seattle WA 98102
  facebook.com/events/34023879651430
• Saturday, May 19th • 10am-Noon
  Douglass-Truth Library (2300 E. Yesler Way, Seattle 98122)
  facebook.com/events/197250677286595

For more information check out:
socialjusticeeducators.org
teacherassembly/socialjusticeeducators/
Call or text: 206.550.1609

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We can do better together. Please join us. Let’s do this together. LET’S WIN TOGETHER!
Mandy Manning for WEA President

(Editor’s Note: the steering committee of Social Equity Educators voted to endorse Mandy Manning for WEA President. Manning, the 2018 National Teacher of the Year, was selected from the Council of Chief State School Officers. She teaches English Language Learners in the Newcomer Center at Joff E. Ferris High School in Spokane, Wash. Last May, Manning was invited to the White House to receive an award honoring her from Donald Trump.)

While receiving the award, she stated a silent protest. She handed Trump a statuette instead of 45 dolls written by her immigrant students, in which they explained their “hopes and dreams for the future” and their disagreements with Trump’s rhetoric and policies toward refugees and immigrants. In addition, she wore several pins on her dress — one that read “Rights Take Rights,” another from the Women’s March, an apple with the LGBTQ pride colors, plus pins from the National Education Association, Peace Corps and Teacher of the Year program.

Most recently, motivated by her outrage at the Trump administration’s actions to deport and incarcerate children at the U.S. border and the separation of children from their parents, she began organizing with other State Teachers of the Year to set up a group called Teachers Against Child Detention. They held a Teach-In for Freedom on February 17 in El Paso, Texas. Below is an interview of Manning by SEE member and Substitute Teacher Darrin Hoop about why she’s running for WEA President and what she hopes to accomplish if elected.

Hoop: What are the main issues you want WEA members to know you support in your campaign for WEA President?

Manning: My 20 years in my classroom and visiting other peoples’ classrooms have confirmed, and taught me how great a deal about our education system and all we need to do to ensure ours is a system that not serves itself, but that serves our students and all of those who work in our schools. This means working to ensure ours is not a system of oppression, but one that believes in every child’s potential and is working to support, and respecting those who are working in schools to create learning environments in which all children can reach their potential.

As educators and education support professionals, we have the experience and expertise to lead this change. After 10 years of active participation in Spokane EA and winning the power of the collective we hold in our own state and in others, I believe that our union and all of us working together, is our way to truly shape our schools into places of equity and community, not only for our students, but for all of those who work in our schools.

We must empower locals to empower members. WEA is a collective bargaining organization. Our members serve approximately 1.1 million students in 295 school districts across our state. With 21 District councils and 400 locals representing nearly 95,000 members, it stands to reason that WEA is an organization of systems. We must examine these systems to ensure that WEA is providing support to bottom-up decision-making and leadership processes that place members at the helm of our organization.

Each of our 400 locals has an individual need and we must equip our local leaders to empower their members to take the lead on action to meet those community needs.

This includes empowering locals to work in solidarity to fight for the funding each community needs in order to meet the needs of all of our students and those who work local and regional, regardless of size and geography. We must also make leadership available and accessible to all members and encourage all members to participate.

2. Equity can only be achieved through action.

During the last 10 years, I have spent a year in every part of my local association at various levels of leadership, I have seen forward movement in becoming an inclusive organization. Much of that focus has been on ensuring we recruit members of color and create systems of support for rural members to participate in their councils, locals, and our representative assembly. In the next term, we need to support emergent leaders to create this move.

Beyond that, our equity work cannot only be inward. We must focus outward and ensure we are collectively working toward equity within our schools. This means supporting the implementation of ethnic studies in classrooms across our state and supporting Black Lives Matter in Schools, among other initiatives. This also means fighting for justice within our system by eliminating standardized assessments to make room for real teaching and make up for lost days dedicated to testing. Eliminating testing will also help schools financially, as testing is excessively expensive and diverts funds away from the programs in our system that are the ones directly impacting students.

3. Transparency and clear communication are essential to developing trust and community

As we enter a new era of unionism under the Supreme Court Janus decision, it is more important than ever that we believe in our union leadership, at every level, from state to council to local, all the way to the building level. This means we need leadership who aren’t afraid to have tough conversations with our classroom and our leaders. Leaders who actively listen and involve all voices in decision-making. And, leaders who trust and expect people to act on their own behalf. We must develop effective means of two-way communication between members and leadership and being transparent in how WEA operates and why.

We must focus on connection.

Along the lines of transparency and clear communication, our union must focus on building relationships that will ensure that WEA has connections between building reps and members, between local leadership and state council leadership, and all the connections with state leadership. We do this by respecting another, viewing every local as essential to our organization, and working together with an asset mindset. We all have strengths and experiences to bring to the table and we must honor the fact that we have different but equally important needs. Our association must ensure we are honoring all voices and learning for the growth of all of grades and locals, regardless of size and geography. We must also make leadership available and accessible to all members and encourage all members to participate.

5. We are a collective organization.

Mandy Manning is the first of a wave of leaders who are stepping forward to lead the future of WEA. Authentic leadership and acts. And trusted. If you were the leader of WEA, I will be available and visible in your community. WEA is member led and led by. Therefore, we must work to ensure members have access to leaders and to leadership. An authentic leader doesn’t endeavor to maintain or hoard power, but rather gives power. With your support, I will listen to you and act with you. Our power is in our collective and I intend to strengthen that collective.

Hoop: The SEH Center for Racial Equity is organizing around five themes of NBIs, Continuing Foundations, and Bylaw Amendments for the WEA R & A. They are: 1. Ethnic Studies 2. Recruitment and Retention of Educators of Color 3. Anti White Supremacy 4. Adoption of a Racial Equity Analysis Tool for NBIs 5. Equitable Race/Ethnicity Selection of WEA Forms/Data Collection

What are your thoughts on these issues? How do you see them connecting to the issues around supporting our immigrant students you are organizing and working on?

Manning: Ethnic Studies — Absolutely, we must see this implemented across the state — in order for that to happen, we must also look at implementation and ensure training in order to effectively roll this out. If teachers aren’t properly trained or are not bought in, it could be more detrimental than effective and we know this work saves students’ lives. So, we must do it right.

Recruitment, Retention, and Support of Educators of Color — This will require true assessment of our systems. How can we expect educators of color to work within a system which actively oppressed them as students and now does the same to them as educators. This conversation is bigger than teacher prep programs and support in the first few years. It will require an entire system overhaul. I’m sure you’re familiar with her work, but Dr. Bettina Lortz new book “We Need to Do More” is an idea of how we can begin this work.

Anti-White Supremacy - This is essential if we don’t work to end white supremacy, none of these other themes will be accomplished.

Adoption of a Racial Equity Analysis Tool for NBIs — Yes, and we not only need to assess our NBIs, but also the system through which they are accomplished, starting with an assessment of our Association.

Equitable Race/Ethnicity Selection of WEA Forms/Data Collection - This is something that once accomplished at the WEA level needs to extend into the schools.

Personally, I am also passionate about immigrant children. It is a right and it is a demand for respect for our schools, to raise expectations of what we are capable of doing. We must empower locals to empower members. Demand A WA State Capital Gains Tax — First and foremost we need to understand how the political system works and how the political system works and how the political system works. We are the majority of full funding is to tax Capital Gains at the highest levels.

Anti Standardized testing - Stop doing what we know, we know what is wrong. Data collection through community 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-racism, anti-oppression pedagogy and practices
- Supporting social movements throughout community alliances
- Full and equitable funding for public education
- Opposing corporate education reform

Our power is in the action we take and we strengthes in the bonds we make with those who must, our fellow educators, and our alliances. We must all demand respect for our schools, to raise expectations of what we are capable of doing.