

UPDATE

Lake Washington Education Association

October 6, 2010

Here's everything you need to know about the Professional Fund

This week you should receive a form from the district asking you to let them know how you'd like your Professional Fund distributed. (New teachers who already received their Professional Fund in August won't be receiving another one.) We thought we'd take this time to answer the most commonly asked questions about the fund:

Q. What is the Professional Fund?

A. Each full-time employee covered under the LWEA contract receives \$2,000 per year to use at their discretion for professional purposes.

Q. What uses of the fund qualify for professional purposes?

A. The fund can be used for anything that is professionally related to your job. Here are some examples:

- Tuition, clock hours, workshop/conference fees and materials
- Home DSL/high speed internet service and installation / cell phone data (not text messaging)
- Memberships to professional organizations (except LWEA, WEA, NEA)
- Subscriptions to professional publications
- Classroom materials and supplies you purchase
- Repayment of student loans incurred after employment
- Other items that are related to your current or potential assignment

Q. Can I take the money as salary?

A. Yes. You can choose salary in increments of \$250 for a half-day of work you perform outside of the contractual work day. This work can be performed at any place, any time, and in any increment of time.

Q. How about a combination of salary and non-salary?

A. That's possible, too. You can split the fund between salary and non-salary items, as long as you do so in \$250 increments.

Q. What's the benefit in taking it as non-salary?

A. Whatever amount you take as non-salary is **tax-free**. Therefore, you get the full amount of money without any deductions.

Q. Can you give me an example of this?

A. Sure. Let's say you're charged \$35 per month for high-speed internet. That amounts to \$420 per year. If you spend another \$80 on classroom materials, that adds up to \$500. If you take that \$500 from your Professional Fund as non-salary, you'll get the full \$500. If you take it as salary, though, you'll only get about \$350 after taxes are taken out. So, you can see how it makes a lot of sense to take whatever you can in tax-free dollars.

Q. Is there any time when it's better to take it as salary?

A. Two occasions come to mind. If you're close to retirement and you think this year might be a year that'll be used to calculate your retirement benefit, then you absolutely should take your entire fund in salary. The other time would be if you don't think you'll spend all the money on materials and other items. You should only select the amount of non-salary money that you're sure you're going to spend on professional expenses.

Q. What if I select money for materials and I don't spend all of it?

A. You will have to either spend the money on professional items, or return the unspent money to the district. So, it's really important to select an amount you know you're going to spend.

Q. Can I change my mind later in the year once I make my selection?

A. No. You need to make a final decision by October 15 as to how you want your fund paid to you.

Continued on page 2

Information & News for Members

Professional Fund - continued

Q. If I purchase instructional materials, who owns them?

A. The District. Otherwise, the IRS would tax you on their value. You can take the items with you to another building in the district as long as they are not permanently affixed, or are part of a bigger whole that would cause a hardship if your piece was removed. (This is for situations in which teachers pool their money to make a large purchase.)

Q. What about using the fund to buy tech equipment?

A. You definitely can do this. The items must be from the district's approved list, however, and will be owned by the district. You can use the items at home and keep them for as long as you're employed by the district, but you'll need to leave them behind if you leave the district. (For the list of approved items, go to Instructional Technology on the LWSD Portal.)

Q. What about buying a laptop?

A. If you choose to use tax-free dollars to buy a laptop, one of the district's designated models will be purchased for you. The district will load it with software and support it during its lifetime. The district will own the laptop, but you'll have exclusive use of it during the time you're employed. Simply indicate on the form that you want a laptop and it'll be ordered for you. This option will use between \$750 - \$1,000 of your Professional Fund.

Q. What if I want to own the laptop myself?

A. If you want to buy a laptop on your own, then you need to take your Professional Fund as taxed salary. You can buy whatever brand or type you want and

you'll own it, but the District won't be able to support it or service it.

Q. Do I have to save receipts for purchases?

A. Yes. Also, the state auditor prohibits personal items from being on the same receipts as those you turn in for your Professional Fund. Make sure you get a separate receipt for your purchases, and don't co-mingle your personal purchases with Professional Fund purchases. You'll be asked to turn in all your receipts once you've spent all the money, but no later than June 1, 2011.

Q. How do I get receipts for high-speed internet when it's on my phone or cable bill?

A. Save the part of the bill each month that shows the amount for internet, highlight those sections, and send them all in with your receipts by June 1, 2011. If it's a bundled package, note the portion that's for internet. For example, if you have cable TV, internet, and phone bundled, internet would be 1/3 of the cost.

Q. When can I start spending money on materials and other items?

A. Any expenses incurred from June 1, 2010 through May 31, 2011 qualify for the fund.

Q. Can I use the fund for travel to a conference?

A. No. The fund can't be used for meals, lodging, mileage, transportation, or substitute costs for attending workshops/conferences.

Q. What if I have further questions?

A. As always, feel free to e-mail or call any of us in the LWEA office. We'll be happy to help!

LWEA Executive Committee

President - Kevin Teeley
LWEA / 425 822-3388
kteeley@lwsd.org

Vice President - Mike Blodgett
Kirkland / 425 936-2420

Primary Rep - Ken Egawa
Blackwell / 425 936-2520

Intermediate Rep - Peggy Solum
Frost / 425 936-2560

Junior High Rep - Vincent Noto
Northstar / 425 936-1760

Senior High Rep - David McGibney
EHS / 425-936-1500

Special Services Rep - Gerry Pappas
Muir / 425 936-2640

Specialist Rep - Jim Eaton
Resource Ctr / 425 936-1363

Ethnic Minority Rep - Ernest Young
Kamiakin / 425-936-2400

lakewashingtonea.org

LWEA Office

10604 NE 38th PI, Suite 212
Kirkland, 98033
425 822-3388

UniServ Rep: Caroline McDowell
cmcdowell@washingtonea.org

Admin Assistant: Sheila Hagerman
shhagerman@lwsd.org

Admin Assistant: Ila Rhea Morrow
imorrow@lwsd.org

LWWEA

Wireless discounts

You can access wireless phone service discounts and save your family money. The participating companies are:

T-Mobile – 14% discount
AT&T – 15% discount
Verizon – 17% discount

To get more information – go to the LWSD Portal and open [Payroll and Benefits](#).

Teacher honored

Brigitte Tennis, head teacher at Stella Schola, was selected as one of seven winners in the nationwide Jones New York in the Classroom for excellence in teaching. She was flown to New York City, given a fashion makeover, an appearance on the “Martha Stewart Show” and cash for her classroom and school. Congratulations, Brigitte!

Benefits Fair winners

Some of this year’s Benefits Fair participants not only came away with useful information regarding their medical plan but many of them became happy recipients of door prizes. Some of the lucky winners were:

Donna Brewer	Bobbe Simpson
Luke Johnson	Nancy Simpson
Mike Green	Kristen Broadie
Lana Fulwiler	Dan Phalen
Louisa Wong	Charlene Luttge
Ellie Krajewski	Scott Emry
Mike Singh	Margaret Snowdon
Kim Wiersum	George Crowden
Christi Miret	Majorie Pacholec
Steve Roetcisoender	Cheryl Szypulski

WEA Children’s Fund

Do you know students whose families can’t afford to buy a warm coat, a new pair of boots, or basic school supplies? The WEA Children’s Fund reimburses WEA members who buy items to meet the modest, immediate needs of their students. Find out more by clicking “How to [Access the Fund](#).”

United Way donations

You can designate the WEA Children’s Fund when contributing to the United Way Campaign. Donations are tax deductible and giving is easy. Use the link above to find out more.

Parents in your classroom?

While the District and the Association encourage parents to visit schools and classrooms, visitations do need to be planned in advance with the principal and the teacher. Whenever possible, the teacher should have an opportunity to meet with the parent before and after the observation.

In addition, no mechanical or electronic listening or recording device can be used in your classroom without your knowledge and permission.

Calendar

Oct. 6	Overcrowding Input Session Resource Center, 5-7 PM
Oct. 11	School Board Meeting
Oct. 12	Open Enrollment Ends Be sure to turn in your paperwork
Oct. 12	Executive Committee

Next Rep Assembly – Oct. 19

Marketplace

SERVICES

To the T Home Inspections: Buying or selling a home - need a home inspection? Fully licensed pest & dangerous chemical inspector. For more info, contact Tyler Tachell at 425-466-7441 or tyler@TDThomeinspections.com. (Janine Tachell, Frost).

Remodels, additions, & new construction: specializes in kitchens, bath, decks, siding & more. Over 30 yrs experience. Licensed/bonded – RICKTC196QA. Rick Tachell Construction at 425-823-5046. (Janine Tachell, Frost).

Winter is coming – prepare your yard, landscape, irrigation, winterize your sprinkler system. Yard clean-up, get rid of those fallen leaves. No job too big or too small. Licensed & bonded. Call David at 206-963-2068. (Janette Cimburek, Resource Ctr).

Pretty tile – ugly grout? Let the Grout Doctor take care of all your grout & tiles needs. For a free estimate, call John Start at 425-947-0060. (Ila Morrow, LWEA).

Computer problems? Let me help you – at less than the price of the “big box” stores. Software installs / updates, virus/spyware/malware removal, data recovery, back up of your important files, computer upgrades, wireless networking, game console set-up/networking, general computer repairs, new computer set-up. If I can't fix it – it's free. Free pickup & delivery in greater Seattle or Eastside area. Fast, friendly. Call for pricing, Chris at 425-320-1397. (Sheila Hagerman, LWEA).

FOR SALE

1997 Subaru Outback Ltd wagon, mechanic's special, loaded w/ equipment – no sunroof, exterior in good shape. Dog thought leather interior was made of Milk Bone – tape & teeth marks on dash & doors. Cooling system occasionally leaks – don't know where or how. Loosing compression (power) – could need a tune-up. Leaks a little oil – always has. Tabs NOT current. 138K miles (we got at 57K). Starts & runs & stops. Rob Luckey (Kirkland) 206-979-5802.

Fischer 185cm shaped skis, excellent condition, barely used, \$100. Nordica men's boots, size 10, like new, \$50. Or \$125 for both. Call Perry Thacker at 425-502-1347. (Brooke Thacker, Rush).

Klahanie townhome in smaller complex w/ neighborhood feel – ready to move in. 2 bedrooms, 2.5 bath, high ceilings, living room opens to backyard, granite kitchen w/ room for dinette or desk, gas fireplace, 2-car garage. Near shopping & Issaquah schools, lakes, pools, trails, tennis courts, + more. \$245,000. Leann Grim (Carson) 206-200-0679.

Proform Crosswalk XL treadmill, spacesaver – folds up when not in use. 7 yrs old but Mom only used it maybe 5 times. \$200. Gary Johansen (LWHS) 425-486-1862.



Great links – great information!

[National Education Association](#)
[NEA Member Benefits](#)
[Washington Education Association](#)

[Department of Retirement Systems](#)
[NEA Teacher Tools](#)
[NEA Health Information Network](#)

**Pending available space, ads are run in the Update on a first come, first served basis.
Ads are accepted only in written form – send directly to Sheila Hagerman – shhagerman@lwsd.org.
Ads are subject to approval by the Executive Committee and may be edited for length.**