

### The District Doesn't Trust Teachers

Just in the last few days the district bargaining team admitted to the BEA bargaining team that they don't trust teachers to make significant or permanent changes to daily scripted lessons.

After 6 months of bargaining, and a strike of over 1,150 teachers, the district has finally agreed teachers can make minor changes to daily lessons only if they meet the exact scripted goal of that day. These changes cannot be used 2 years in a row, unless they are submitted to and approved by the curriculum department.

Here are just a few examples of changes in lessons you cannot make under the district's current proposal:

**Language Arts 4<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade:** Many teachers believe there far too few lessons on punctuation and grammar. You cannot add lessons in these areas, since that might supplant the scripted lesson goal of the day.

**Elementary Science/ELL:** Teachers of ELL students find the ELL kids can learn the parts of a bug in 2<sup>nd</sup> grade, but they need a word wall to help them spell words correctly on the district assessments. Unless the district's curriculum department approves that word wall, teachers of ESL students cannot use it 2 years in a row. Imagine teachers of ESL students having to submit every change in daily scripted lessons and assessments in hopes a committee approves their professional choices to assist ELL students.

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade US History:** Veteran teachers say the current set of daily lessons exceed 180 teaching days (cannot be done in one year). However, those lessons do not include any instruction on the U.S. Presidential election currently taking place. The only way to teach this historic event is to eliminate some existing lessons on the curriculum web. The district's current curriculum proposal would not allow teachers to address the election in any meaningful way in the next 2 months. We can refer to the election after the fact, later in the year, when teaching the US Constitution.

**Middle School Math:** Since the district only allows one level of math at each grade in Middle School, there are many bored and overwhelmed students simultaneously stuck in the same class. The District's current curriculum proposal wouldn't allow a teacher to develop entirely new topics of instruction to engage the bored students. Additionally, while teachers would be allowed to make small adjustments for struggling kids, they couldn't use those changes the following year without the approval of the Curriculum Department.

**Please write to the Karen Clark, Superintendent, and the Bellevue School Board and ask them to stop saying they have met all the demands of teachers regarding curriculum. If that were true, the two bargaining teams would not have spent hours on this topic just yesterday.**

**Here is an example of just such a letter...**

*I am disappointed that the Bellevue School District has done so little to avoid the teachers' strike. You have known since early summer that this was a possibility and yet only brought in a mediator this past weekend.*

*I am concerned that the District continues to have such a strong hold on how teachers should be doing their job. There are already ways established to ensure that kids are getting the same education – standards, objectives, even testing. Teachers should be allowed to use their expertise in determining how to present material that is appropriate for their classroom. Children learn differently and teachers should teach based on those differences.*

*Who has time to go before a committee to get approval for such changes if they are to be incorporated for more than a year? Will teachers get overtime because of the added time this takes? By attempting to implement this plan, are you saying that in the past teachers have not been held accountable?*

*Please resolve this in a way that benefits the students by providing the best learning atmosphere for each child – one that can be easily and readily structured to individual learning and teaching styles. Get rid of the "big brother" atmosphere.*

*Sincerely,  
Carol Anne Yamamoto  
Mother of 2 students in the Bellevue School District*