

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – WALK OUT?

Q. What is a walkout?

A. *The walk out would occur when a vast majority of EEA members decide together to not report to work, with the goal being to close the school system for a day to protest lack of funding for education.*

Q. Who makes the decision to conduct a walkout?

A. *Although this is a state-wide OEA action, locally, the members of EEA will make the decision. Such an event is predicated on a majority of the membership participating. This decision lies in the hands of you and your colleagues, and no one else.*

Q. What has brought us to this crisis?

A. *Funding for education in Oregon has been lacking for decades. We all know the statistics, such as leading the nation with our low graduation rate. Plus, we also know the daily stress of educating students without the resources we need to do our jobs at the highest level. Now, the Oregon legislature has released a proposed budget that brings budget cuts to 4J of \$5 million, and in Bethel, \$2 million, over the next biennium. We cannot let this proposed budget stand!*

Q. Why now?

A. *We believe that this legislative session represents the best chance we have had in decades to see Oregon re-invest in education. Some of this is due to a pro-education Governor whose party holds a super-majority in the legislature. And, right now is a national moment for educators – witness the success of the Red for Ed movement in so many other places!*

Q. A walk out seems like a drastic action. How does it help our students to disrupt their education in this way?

A. *We will only hold a walk out if it is absolutely necessary – the legislature could pass a budget to fully fund education without us having to make such a dramatic statement, but it is unlikely.*

We all see the harm that lack of funding does to our students on a daily basis. The idea of the walk out is to sacrifice one day of disruption in the interest of winning a better future for our students.

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Additionally, we will work with the Districts ahead of the walkout to ensure that students who need it, have nutrition and safe places to be during the walkout and that no critical testing at secondary will be disrupted.

Q. Why walkout on May 8th?

A. *We believe that May 8th represents the best timing for making the strongest impact on Salem as they deliberate the budget.*

Q. Is one day of a walkout really going to be enough to win the funding we need?

A. *The walkout would be the culmination of actions that we have taken, which started with the President's Day March on February 18th. In the final analysis, the only guarantee that we have is this: Doing nothing will ensure that everything stays the same!*

Q. What will we do on the day that we walkout?

A. *On the day of the walkout, it will be vitally important that educators make themselves very visible in our community. We have not yet decided how that will happen, but there will be mass pickets scheduled maybe at two of the busiest commute points of the day.*

Q. What are the risks of walking out?

A. *In the District's that we represent, we do not anticipate strong Administrative opposition to the walk out. There is safety in numbers created when a majority of educators act together. We also believe that the majority of our community would support us in this effort. This is not to say that the walk out won't involve sacrifices. Potentially, it could result in the loss of a day's pay, or the possibility of another day being added to this year's calendar. We know that this is a big decision, but we also know that to make significant progress often involves sacrifice. EEA is recommending this step in the interest of the future of our students and our careers as educators.*