

JUNE 2023

HOTLINE

A PUBLICATION OF THE WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS



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Michelle Whitney

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IT'S SUMMER!
Celebrate the end of
the school year and
all your hard work!

HOTLINE

IN THIS ISSUE OF

THE END OF A SCHOOL YEAR

This edition of *Hotline* comes at the end of our WASA/AWSP Annual Summer Conference 2023 in Spokane. We want to sincerely thank each and every one of our attendees, members, exhibitors, sponsors, and presenters for their support. Without you, we wouldn't be able to do what we do.

The last few years have been difficult, but we've proven that together, if we put in the work, we can make it. We can make a supportive environment for our students and staff.

Hear from our Executive Director, Joel Aune, along with outgoing WASA President, Michelle Whitney, as they review this year.

Then, explore the rest of the publication for upcoming events, more voices from the field, award winners, region updates, and reflections from retiring superintendents.

Thank you to Joel Aune, Michelle Whitney, Mike Villarreal, Damien Pattenaude, Tracey Edou, Marty Brewer, Helene Paroff, Katie Novak, Hanover Research, Adam Swinyard, Dan Steele, Mike Nelson, Chris Rust, Suzanne Schmick, Tim Ames, Laurel Browning, Brian Wharton, Kaley VonVolkli, Lisa Gehman, Sheila Chard, and Bella Troiani for your contributions to this issue of *Hotline*.

Do you have an idea for our next issue of *Hotline*?
Send an email to Bella Troiani at btroiani@wasa-oly.org.

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A MESSAGE FROM WASA PRESIDENT, MICHELLE WHITNEY

For my last Hotline article, I wanted to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude for the incredible honor and privilege of serving as the President of WASA. I am humbled by the trust and confidence you have placed in me, and I am truly grateful for the opportunity to lead and make an impact on the field of education in our state.

It has been inspiring to collaborate with colleagues leveraging our collective expertise and diverse perspectives to advance the mission and vision of WASA. Together, we helped shape policies, centered equity, advocated for meaningful change, and created transformative opportunities for students, educators, and communities across Washington.

I want to extend my heartfelt appreciation to all WASA members for your ongoing passion, engagement, and dedication to the field of education. It is through your unwavering commitment and contributions that we have elevated the profession of education and empower every student to reach their full potential.

I look forward to continuing to be a witness to the profound impact of this incredible organization. I am excited about the meaningful work we have accomplished together and look forward to continuing to collaborate, innovate, and champion educational excellence, equity, and success for all.

Michelle Whitney is Superintendent of Pasco SD and WASA President 2022–23. Michelle will continue to serve on the WASA Board as AASA Liaison.



ADVANCING EDUCATIONAL EQUITY: WASA's Commitment to Support School District Leaders



WASA Friends and Colleagues,

WASA has long been a staunch advocate for educational equity. However, we recognize that true equity has yet

to be achieved within our schools. In April 2022, the WASA Board made a significant stride by adopting the association's first-ever [Educational Equity Statement](#).

The statement is a public declaration of WASA's commitment to providing support to you, the leaders of our state's schools, as you work to advance educational equity. *Advance educational equity...* what exactly does that mean?

Advancing educational equity is an ongoing pursuit aimed at building an inclusive and equitable education system. This pursuit emphasizes the importance of acknowledging and celebrating diversity, including differences in race, ethnicity, language, socioeconomic status, gender identity, and more. Advancing educational equity involves cultivating a culture where every student feels valued, respected, and supported—an environment where students experience a strong sense of

belonging. Advancing educational equity also involves addressing systemic barriers and disparities that exist within the education system.

*Advance educational equity...*In previous issues of *Hotline*, Yakima Superintendent Trevor Greene shared his perspective of "Cultural Competency," and Yelm Deputy Superintendent Lisa Caderno-Smith reflected on "Diversity." In this issue of *Hotline*, WASA President-elect Mike Villarreal expresses his thoughts on "Equity."

Throughout the past year, the Educational Equity Statement has been the driving force behind WASA's work. The statement has been consistently prominent in our messaging, communications, and work-focus. Our professional learning offerings have been grounded in equity. Last year's legislative priorities were put forward within the context of equity for students and schools.

At its core, WASA is about leadership—leadership for equity and excellence for all students. As school district leaders, it is paramount that your work is anchored in equity—a resolute commitment to equity and excellence for every student.

Looking ahead to next year, I promise you that WASA will continue to champion educational equity. You will witness strong evidence in our messaging, communications, professional learning programming, and legislative advocacy efforts. We will commit to providing vision, leadership, resources, and support as you strive to build cultures of belonging and eradicate gaps that stem from systemic inequities in our schools.

The pursuit of excellence and equity is an ongoing journey that demands persistence, courage, and elegant leadership. It requires an honest look at the data and student voice, prompting genuine inquiries that lead to words and actions that change the system to ensure all students receive the resources and opportunities necessary to achieve their potentials.

Theodore Roosevelt once said, "Nothing worth having comes easy." Advancing educational equity is hard work, but it is the right work.

Congratulations on all that has been accomplished in your district during the past year. Your leadership matters.

Have a great summer!

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY STATEMENT



WASA's Educational Equity Statement, adopted by the Board last April, articulates WASA's commitment to providing leadership while supporting superintendents and school district leaders as they lead for equity. WASA believes that Educational Equity, for each and every student, will be attained when barriers are removed throughout the system, ensuring equal access and opportunity for students to achieve successful outcomes.

The statement further defines cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion—all essential elements of educational equity. In this issue of Hotline, Hoquiam School District Superintendent Mike Villarreal shares his thinking on equity...

As the father of five children, I have often heard the words, "That's NOT FAIR!"

...Her piece of cake is bigger than mine...He never has to do any work...You always pay attention to her and not me...When I was his age, I had to ride the bus and he got a car!

Over the years I have reflected on this idea of fairness. Fairness is defined as a principle or concept that refers to the state or quality of being just, impartial, or equitable. It involves treating all individuals or parties in a manner that is unbiased, reasonable, and without favoritism or discrimination. But does fairness mean that I treat each of my children exactly the same? I don't think so because each is an individual with unique characteristics, strengths, and challenges. As a father I must consider their individual needs. In public education we call this equity.

WASA's Educational Equity Statement defines equity as "the condition that would be achieved if one's group membership no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares. Equity is the outcome, not just access to opportunity."

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Educational equity is built upon the following tenets:

- **Equal Access to Quality Education**—Removing barriers and providing resources that are accessible to all.
- **Personal Support and Individualized Learning**—Recognizing and addressing diverse learning needs.
- **Culturally Responsive Education**—Creating systems that reflect diversity and promote a sense of belonging and mutual respect.
- **Addressing Systematic Disparities**—Identifying and challenging biases, discriminatory practices, and institutional barriers.

Equity in public education is not a mere ideal; it is a fundamental right that ensures every student has an equal opportunity to succeed and contribute to society. By providing equal access to quality education, personalized support, culturally responsive teaching, and addressing systemic disparities, we can create a fair and inclusive educational landscape.

Investing in equity in public education is an investment in our collective future, where every individual can thrive and fulfill their potential, regardless of their background or circumstances. Let us work together to build a society that cherishes education as a pathway to equity, empowerment, and social progress.



Mike Villarreal, Superintendent of the Hoquiam School District, will serve as WASA President in 2023-24. Mike also served on the advisory committee that developed WASA's Educational Equity Statement, adopted by the Board in April, 2022.

BECOME A LIFE MEMBER

Stay connected after retirement for a low, one-time fee.

As you approach retirement and looking to the future, we hope you will continue your membership with WASA as a Retired/Life member for a one-time enrollment fee of just \$125. This membership will allow you to receive WASA publications, including conference notifications, newsletters, and legislative updates. You will also be able to participate in selected conferences with "meals only" charges. As you know, it is the members, individually and collectively, that make us a strong and vibrant organization. We are grateful for your support of WASA as an active member, and we look forward to your continued participation in WASA as a Retired/Life member. Thank you for considering a Lifetime membership.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM WASA Region Presidents

REGION 110

Back in February, WASA 110 hosted an event where Angela Jones, Director of the Washington State Initiative at the Gates Foundation, presented to superintendents and staff throughout our regions (as well as region 111) regarding the foundation's new Washington State Strategy for public education.

This new strategy focuses on post-secondary educational attainment and was developed after a year-long process that involved guidance

and input from more than 200 educators, researchers, district leaders, parents, and community members.

At the meeting, superintendents learned about future opportunities for joining regional learning networks and new grants that will focus on three-five regions where community groups design programs supported by evidence-based practices that research shows can improve student success.



Damien Pattenau, Region 110 President, serves as superintendent of the Renton School District.

REGION 171

In North Central Washington, we have used a thorough line of systems improvement, especially focusing on mathematics, during all of our Superintendents' Advisory Council meetings this school year. We have learned about systems tools, systems thinker strategies, community connections, specific data-rich resources, and we have learned from each other. In September, we observed patterns and trends overtime. In October, we examined data with demographics. In January, we surfaced and tested assumptions. In February, we identified leverage points, and in March, we considered mental models. In April,

we finished off the series with the Systems Leader Toolbox. We learned to think about questions such as: what are the relationships among the parts of the system and how do they affect the behavior of the system? How can recognizing the many aspects of the system create a better understanding of the system as a whole? How does understanding one system transfer to understanding of another system? By focusing specifically on math in our districts, we were able to grapple with these questions in a more manageable but yet meaningful and transferable way.

We greatly appreciate the support of Dr. Sue Kane, Dr. Linda McKay, Dr. Michelle Price, Washington Laser, and the North Central Educational Service District for providing us this rich opportunity.



Tracey Edou, Region 117 President, serves as superintendent of the Cascade School District.

REGION 114

In Region 114, we have prioritized system development, equity, and professional support for one another. Most of our meetings have been in-person this year and it has been great to just enjoy the time we spent together. We have provided more social time in our meeting schedule this year. While it is important to strike a balance between social time and accomplishing meeting objectives, prioritizing social interactions has contributed to a more positive and productive meeting environment. Together we have provided opportunities for building relationships, supporting well-being, informal learning, and enhancing overall engagement among peers.

Dr. Aaron Leavell will be completing his first year as our ESD Superintendent. His transition has been successful and the great leaders of ESD 114 have appreciated his sense of honoring traditional regional agreements while providing his own new perspectives, innovative ideas, and fresh approaches and opportunities faced in our region. Tim Winter will be the next president of our region, and we are excited to welcome him into this leadership role.

It has been an honor to serve as President of WASA region 114. We have outstanding professionals in our region who have provided me with collective expertise,

dedication, and an overall commitment to the work. This has been invaluable in this leadership role. I am so appreciative of the advice, guidance, and encouragement provided by my peers throughout my two years of service. Thank you for this opportunity.

Enjoy the well-deserved summer break.



Region 114 President Marty Brewer serves as superintendent of the Port Angeles School District.

Inclusionary Practices

Statewide Support for District Change



As of this writing, WASA is anxiously awaiting news regarding the Inclusionary Practices Project and what it might look like this coming year. With the Legislature decreasing the amount of overall funding to support this effort, there will surely be changes in OSPI's plans for funding projects. There are a few things, though, that WASA does know! WASA remains firmly committed to assisting districts as they move to providing more inclusive education to students with disabilities. Dr. Amy Wright will assume the role of the Inclusionary Practices Project Director on July 1, as Helene Paroff retires from the position. The project will be in excellent hands as Amy has served as a WASA Inclusionary Practices Project Lead for the past two years as well as having been a successful district and building level leader. You can be sure that Amy will be in contact with the WASA membership as soon as more is known about the 2023–24 WASA IPP project design. In the meantime, please feel free to reach out to her at awright@wasa-oly.org.

HOW ALL TEACHERS CAN SUPPORT

Students with Disabilities in General Education Classrooms

Helene Paroff, retiring Director of Inclusionary Practices and recipient of the Golden Gavel Award 2023, has partnered with Katie Novak, of Novak Education and Inclusionary Practices, to create a free comprehensive tool to assist ALL teachers in supporting students with disabilities in general education classrooms. This comprehensive tool includes examples for supports and services, an organized flow chart, MTSS definitions, and detailed instructions.

You can access this tool [here](#)!

INCLUSIONARY PRACTICES



HANOVER RESEARCH

Member Survey

Last January, WASA commissioned Hanover Research to conduct a survey of WASA members. What follows is a summary of Hanover's survey analysis:

- 410 members responded to the survey.
- Overall Perception and Familiarity: 92 percent responded either Very or Somewhat Positive (Superintendents are most familiar).
- Familiarity With WASA: 86 percent indicated being Extremely/Very and Somewhat Familiar.
- Members view Conferences and Legislative Updates as the most valuable WASA resources.
- Legislative: Members view *TWIO* and the End of Session Report as the most valuable legislative resources.
- Professional Learning: 83 percent are either Completely or Somewhat Satisfied. The most frequently used resources include Summer Conference and Lunch and Learn Offerings.
- Member Support: 64 percent Completely Satisfied, 5 percent Dissatisfied, 31 percent have not utilized Member Support.
- Topics of Interest: The top two areas of interest among members include Increasing Confidence in Public Education and Strategic Planning.
- Hanover Research provided the following recommendations for consideration:
 1. Provide research-based support and resources related to increasing public confidence in public education and strategic planning.
 2. Increase awareness of member support resources.
 3. Expand outreach efforts to prospective members beyond superintendents.

While there is always room for growth, Hanover Research viewed member feedback as generally positive and strong, with no glaring concerns. The WASA Leadership Team will further analyze the data this summer to inform planning and association priorities for 2023–24 and beyond.



WASA MISSION STATEMENT

The Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) is an organization for professional administrators that is committed to leadership:

- Leadership in providing equity and excellence in student learning.
- Leadership in developing competent, ethical, and visionary leaders by:
 - Promoting community and legislative support for education.
 - Providing member services.
 - Offering growth opportunities for leaders.



WASA's beliefs are anchored in *Leadership*, *Trust*, and *Advocacy*. WASA is, first and foremost, about *Leadership* for equity and excellence for all students. WASA members exemplify *Trust*, through competence, integrity, and vision. WASA's *Advocacy* efforts focus on building widespread support and a singular voice to secure the resources and policy necessary to advance public education in the state of Washington.

In this issue of Hotline, Spokane Public Schools Superintendent Adam Swinyard highlights the most prominent pillar of WASA's Mission Statement—Leadership.

As Superintendent, I firmly believe that leadership is the paramount attribute that will shape the future of public education in the 21st century. In this rapidly changing world, where there are evolving challenges and opportunities, effective leadership becomes crucial in guiding our schools towards excellence. However, leadership in education is not just about policies and administrative decisions; it is about leading through the lens of love and relationships, establishing a sense of belonging, and fostering a supportive and nurturing environment.

I strongly believe that the most important function of school leaders is to create a culture where every student, staff, and family member feels an authentic sense of belonging. By leading with love and empathy, we can build

genuine and meaningful relationships with school communities. When individuals feel a deep connection and experience love regardless of the setting or context, they are more likely to thrive and move through the world as the best version of themselves. It is our responsibility as leaders to cultivate an environment where relationships are prioritized, and we model a genuine pursuit of leading with love.

To foster a dream, access, and opportunity for every student, there must be a collective effort to prioritize the power of relationships.

By showing compassion and understanding, we can create a safe and nurturing space for students to learn and grow. When we lead with love and model it's impact for others, we

inspire school systems that ignite trust and create an atmosphere where students feel supported and encouraged to take risks, explore their passions, and reach their full potential.

Leadership guided by love and focused on establishing relationships is the cornerstone of shaping the future—one that prepares students for success and empowers them to make a positive impact in the world.



Adam Swinyard, 2023 Washington State Superintendent of the Year, has served as Superintendent of the Spokane Public Schools since 2020.

Opportunities for *you*



INCOMING SUPERINTENDENTS CONFERENCE

Sunday, July 23 | 1–8 p.m.

Monday, July 24 | 8 a.m.–3 p.m.

Marriott Tacoma Downtown | Tacoma, WA

Incoming Superintendents, this one is for you!! Personally connect with incoming superintendents across the state, meet WASA staff, and learn from experienced superintendents.



MTSS FEST 2023

August 3, 2023 | 8:30 a.m.–4 p.m.

August 4, 2023 | 8:30 a.m.–2 p.m.

Three Rivers Convention Center | Kennewick, WA

OSPI, in partnership with WASA and support from our ESDs, is proud to offer 2023 MTSS Fest. This year's theme is Advancing Your Leadership to Support Student Learning and Belonging. The focus of these two days will be to provide tools and strategies to strengthen your systems. You and your school district teams will not want to miss these dynamic two days of impactful learning. We encourage prompt registration as we expect this conference to fill quickly!



SPECIAL EDUCATION DIRECTORS PRECONFERENCE

August 2, 2023 | 11 a.m.–5 p.m.

Three Rivers Convention Center | Kennewick, WA

The Special Education Preconference is designed for ALL Special Education administrators and coordinators in Washington State—to provide information needed to be successful in the ever changing.



BTS SPARK PERSONALIZED LEADERSHIP COACHING

From May 2023, and continuing through the next school year, the partnership between BTS Spark and WASA will see BTS Spark's professional coaches providing one-to-one personalized leadership coaching for educational administrators. This partnership seeks to grow and develop the leadership skills of school and district leaders across Washington state. "Leadership is contextual," says Sean Slade, co-Head of BTS Spark, North America, "which is why a personalized approach to leadership development is so needed."

[Read the press release here!](#)



INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

September–June | Virtual and In-Person Sessions

This professional learning opportunity has been designed as a self-contained series of virtual and in-person learning opportunities. The purpose is to help ANY leaders, those previously in the ILN and those who have not been in the ILN, who would like to expand their own leadership capacity and to intentionally implement the work of teaching and learning in their district.



EARLY CAREER SUPERINTENDENT ACADEMY

September–May | Virtual

With support from OSPI, this academy was developed to provide support to early career superintendents. Registration is open for WASA's Early Career Superintendents Academy! Please join your colleagues from across the state who are also new to the role of superintendent!



MENTOR ACADEMY

September–March | Virtual

With support from OSPI, this Academy is designed to increase the skills of the mentor to better support incoming superintendents in becoming effective leaders. Registration is open for WASA's Mentor Academy! Please join your colleagues from across the state who are also mentoring a new to the role of superintendent! It is our goal that with quality mentor support we will reduce the superintendent churn in the state of Washington.

DAN STEELE PROVIDES A 2023 Legislative Update

In 2023, the Legislature returned to in-person activities, as the COVID-19 pandemic (for the most part) moves to the rearview mirror. The focus was on new biennial Operating, Capital, and Transportation Budgets—along with a slew of policy issues. As the state moves beyond the pandemic, budgets and policy bills addressed other pressing needs. Housing, homelessness, and behavior health were among the top-tier issues that received the most attention. Unfortunately, K–12 education, the constitutional paramount duty, was moved to the backburner.

Coming into the session, it was clear that getting education issues on the radar was going to be a struggle. In December, just prior to the Legislature convening, Stuart Elway, (via [Crosscut/Elway Poll](#)) released the results of his annual issue survey. For over thirty years Elway has conducted a poll, asking registered voters to name their top legislative priorities for the coming session. For most of the last thirty years, Education has landed in highest tier, often as the highest or second highest priority; a small handful of times it was ranked third or fourth. In 2022, however, Education, for the first time since the poll has been conducted, ranked dead last, with only five percent of voters naming it a priority in 2023. So, coming into the session, we knew it would be a struggle to get education issues on the radar.

The concern hit home in late December when Governor Inslee released his 2023–25 budget request. He requested an increase of

over \$6.0 billion beyond the current 2021–23 budget—and K–12 education only received a token nod. When Inslee presented his annual State of the State address the first week of session, he reiterated his priorities—and, again, gave a token nod to K–12. In fact, the few education issues he addressed were required Maintenance Level items—items that were already scheduled to be funded with adjustments for enrollment or inflation.

In the end, the Legislature adopted a 2023–25 Operating Budget that provides an increase of \$2.9 billion for K–12 education (just over half of the budget's total \$5.7 billion increase). That is very positive—until you drill down into the details. That \$2.9 billion increase is comprised of \$2.6 billion in REQUIRED Maintenance Level costs. Budget-writers only provided \$346 million in discretionary Policy Level decisions. In addition, a significant amount of those Policy Level increases include one-time federal funds.

Nevertheless, educators did score a few key wins, both in the budget and in policy issues. Perhaps the most impactful success is a substantial investment of \$370 million for special education. Although we are pleased about the progress, this major enhancement is still less than half of what is needed to fully fund special education services. Districts will still be required to secure local resources, including levy funds, to backfill a continued underfunding of a legally required basic education program. We will be back to supplement this “down payment” next year.

Speaking of next year, WASA's Legislation & Finance Committee has already turned its attention to 2024 and is in the process of developing a new Legislative Platform, which is scheduled to be acted upon by the WASA Board at the end of June. Stay tuned for details.

As we roll out our Platform and move forward to the future, we strongly encourage administrators to continue engaging with your local legislators. The successes we achieved in 2023 are mostly due to the sustained efforts of educators. Now is not the time to let up. Use this interim between sessions to build upon your relationships with legislators. Continue to establish trust and credibility so they will come to you for information and advice.

We hope that you will continue to join with WASA—and our education association colleagues—as we raise our collective voices in unison in the going fight for our public schools. YOU are WASA—and we can't do it without you!



*Dan Steele,
Assistant Executive
Director of WASA
Government Services*

**NEXT LEVEL
LEADERS**

WASHINGTON STATE'S PREMIERE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY

Apply by June 30 at
www.NLL.academy

New WASA Members

We've welcomed eight new members since April 2023. Our newest class of WASA members joins over 1,600 members from across Washington. Collectively, they represent diverse districts from every corner of Washington State.

Tricia Jeffries, Endicott
Brittany Tyler, Kittitas
Wendy McCulloch, Snohomish
Erin Romanuk, Lake Washington

Jay Brower, Bethel
Sheri R. Crippen, Quileute
Mari Flosi, ESD 114
Jennifer Johnson, Pasco



WASA'S NEWLY ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS

Congratulations to our newly-elected Chair and Chairs-elect:



BPAC Chair-elect
 Jill Pratt, Rochester



IPAC Chair-elect
 Denise Daniels, Fife

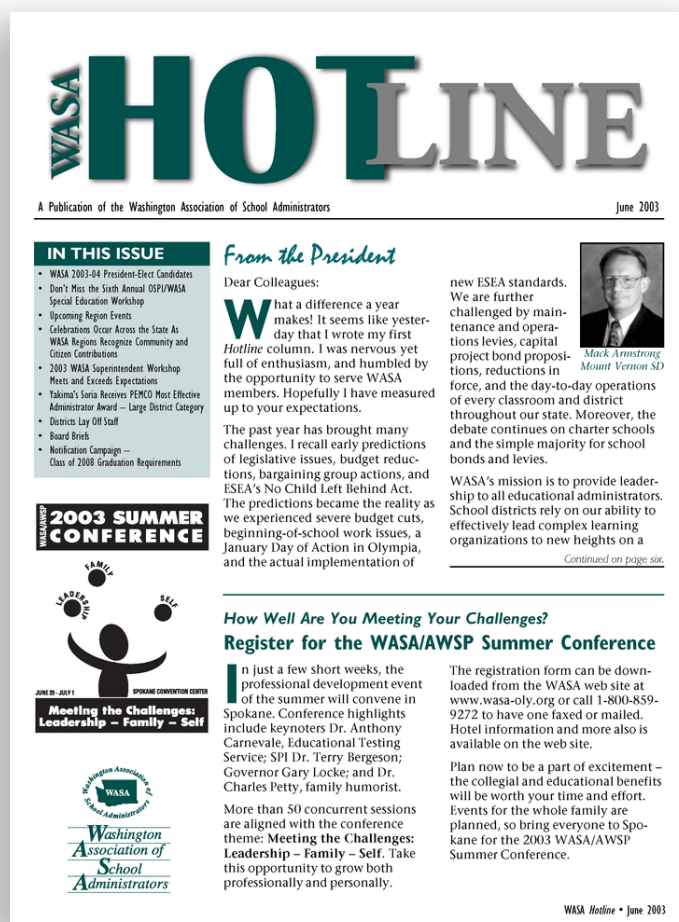


Special Education Chair
 John Sander, Franklin Pierce



Superintendent Chair-elect
 Joey Castilleja, Mabton

A LOOK BACK *HOTLINE* 20 YEARS AGO



Check out the June 2003 issue of *Hotline*, which included:

- 2003 Summer Conference Program Details: Meeting the Challenges: Leadership—Family—Self
- WASA Region Celebrations
- "Budget Challenges Necessitate Layoffs"
- 2003 WASA Superintendent Workshop at Semiahmoo

You can view this historical issue, along with others, on our website. Throughout the year, we will continue to highlight and compare our current issues with those of the past.

JUNE REMINDERS

Connect with Us

Be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) for information on upcoming conferences and workshops, legislative news and updates, and school news.

Update Your Profile

If you haven't already, please help us keep our membership directory up to date by taking a moment to upload your photo to your WASA member profile page. Contact Sheila Chard at schard@wasa-oly.org if you have questions or need assistance.

MEETING THE CANDIDATES

2023–24 President-elect

While online voting will not take place until August 2023, there is plenty of time to learn more about WASA's Presidents-elect! You can view their information on our website, or view their brochures below, telling their story!



Bob Maxwell

Superintendent, Pullman PS

[View Bob's Brochure](#)



Kevin McKay

Superintendent, Selah SD

[View Kevin's Brochure](#)

AASA GOVERNING BOARD ELECTIONS

Congratulations to Ron Banner (At-Large), Wade Smith (East Side), and Nathan McCann (West Side)—recently elected to three-year terms on the AASA Governing Board. They join Krestin Bahr (West Side) and Michelle Price (East Side) as WASA's representatives to the AASA Governing Board. State representation on the Governing Board is determined by the number of AASA members. Washington, with a strong number of AASA members, is well represented by these five electeds.

Thanks to Michelle, Krestin, Nathan, Wade, and Ron for capably representing WASA on the Governing Board.

AASA policy is set by its 135-member Governing Board, drawn from seven distinct U.S. geographic regions. The Governing Board meets twice each year. Governing Board members have dual responsibilities. They represent AASA members in their home state on the Governing Board and they report the work of the Governing Board to their home state affiliate (WASA). Through the Governing Board elected representatives, WASA/AASA members have a voice in AASA decision making.

WASA'S NEWLY ELECTED BOARD MEMBERS

On April 18, leaders from across the entire state gathered for the annual WASA Leaders Workshop. Each year, the WASA Board, WASA President-elect candidates, Region Presidents and Presidents-elect, Component Chairs, and Standing Committee Chairs come together for a full-day work session.

During this year's Leaders Workshop, participants received an overview presentation of the WASA structure, association trends, and budget. A report on progress toward 2022–23 Goals, Action Steps, and Tasks was provided by the WASA executive team, with a focus on the equity work embedded within. Executive Director Joel Aune provided a report on results and key takeaways from the Hanover member survey, which was administered earlier this year.

In looking toward next year, incoming President-elect Mike Villarreal led and facilitated an extended conversation among WASA leaders around his three priorities as incoming president:

- Advance...equitable practices for all students by removing barriers.
- Cultivate...meaningful relationships and partnerships.
- Expand...recruitment and support of professionals that are representative of the diversity within our state.

Feedback and perspective from this extended conversation was captured by the WASA Team, to utilize in setting association priorities for 2023–24.

President: Michelle Whitney, Pasco
President-elect: Mike Villarreal, Hoquiam
Past president: Aaron Leavell, Olympic ESD 114
Secretary: Larry Francois, NCESD 189
Treasurer: Linda McKay, NCESD 171

101 Jake Dingman, Oakesdale
105 Curt Guaglianone, Mount Adams
108 Larry Francois, NWESD 189
109 Chrys Sweeting, Arlington
110 Shaun Carey, Enumclaw
111 Laurie Dent, Sumner-Bonney Lake
112 Nathan McCann, Ridgefield
113 Patrick Murphy, Olympia
114 Dana Rosenbach, North Mason
123 Jim Jacobs, North Franklin
171 Tracey Edou, Cascade

BPAC: Melissa Beard, Steilacoom, *Chair*
Sarah Thornton, Pasco, *Chair-elect*

IPAC: Jenny Rodriguez, Yakima, *Chair*
Linda McKay, NCESD 171, *Chair-elect*
Denise Daniels, Fife, *Past-chair*

Principals: Matt Yarkosky, Bethel, *Chair*

Special Education: John Sander, Franklin Pierce, *Chair*

Superintendents: James Everett, Meridian, *Chair*
Mary Templeton, Washougal, *Chair-elect*
Jeff Snell, Vancouver, *Past-chair*



AASA: Kevin McKay, Selah
Michelle Price, NCESD 171
Nathan McCann, Ridgefield
Krestin Bahr, Peninsula

Higher Ed: Marge Chow, City University

OSPI: Michaela Miller

PESB: Erica Hernandez-Scott

Retirees: Alan Burke, WSRA

SBE: Susana Reyes, Shoreline

WIAA: Doug Burge, Zillah

ESDs: Aaron Leavell, Olympic ESD 114

Pictured Above
WASA 2022-23
Board Members
*posing for a photo in their
most recent meeting.*

Region 101	Suzanne Schmick, St. John Endicott	Region 112	Michael Green, Woodland
Region 105	Kelly Garza, Wapato	Region 113	Byron Bahr, Rainier
Region 108	Chris Granger, Blaine	Region 114	Marty Brewer, Port Angeles
Region 109	Chrys Sweeting, Arlington	Region 123	Jim Fry, College Place
Region 110	Damien Pattenauade, Renton	Region 171	Tracey Edou, Cascade
Region 111	Ron Banner, Clover Park		

The Board approved the following:

- June 2022 Comparative Membership Report
- April 2023 Board Meeting Minutes
- May 2022 Income Statement, Balance Sheet, and Trial Balance
- 2023–24 WASA Goals and Actions
- 2024 WASA Legislative Platform
- Election of WASA Board Secretary and Treasurer
- WASA State Award Proposal: Learning from Leaders

- 2022-23 WASA Goals, Actions and Tasks
- Board of Tellers to Certify the WASA President-elect Election

- Travel Insurance
- 2023 WASA State Award Recipients
- WASA Honorary Awards Luncheon
- WASA President-elect Candidates Reception
- WASA Presidential Celebration Reception

- Professional Learning: Quick Facts Since the April Board Meeting
- What's Next in Professional Learning
- Legislative Update
- Legislation and Finance Committee
- School Funding Coalition
- Management Reviews
- SIRS
- Superintendent Mentor Program

The next WASA Board Meeting is Sunday, **October 1, 2023**, held in conjunction with the Fall Conference.

WASA HONORARY AWARDS

The WASA Honorary Awards Program provides recognition at both the region and state level to individuals who have made extraordinary contributions to K-12 education, including advancing educational equity. WASA's State Awards include the Golden Gavel, DA Davidson Barbara Legacy, Service to WASA, and WASA Leadership Award. At the region level, the WASA Student Achievement Leadership Award, Award of Merit, Community Leadership Award, Student Leadership Award, and Twenty-Year and Retiree Awards recognize school district leaders, community leaders, and student leaders.

Congratulations to this year's recipients. Your stories are truly inspiring!



GOLDEN GAVEL AWARD

HELENE PAROFF

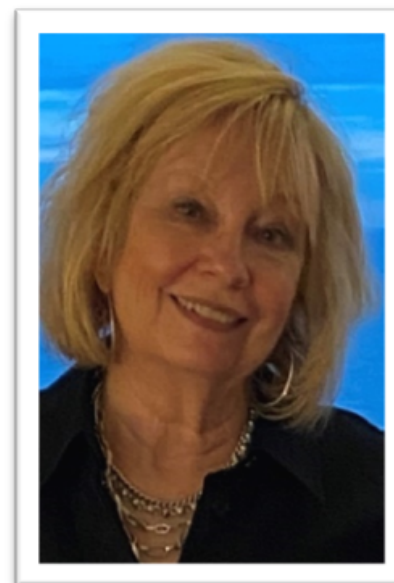
IPP Director
WASA



WASA LEADERSHIP AWARD

KEVIN CHASE

Superintendent
ESD 105



DA DAVIDSON BARBARA MERTENS LEGACY AWARD

DR. GLENYS HILL

Director
Washington State University



SERVICE TO WASA AWARD

DR. JIM KOWALKOWSKI

Director
Rural Education Center



PEMCO ROBERT J. HANDY AWARD (SMALL-SIZED DISTRICT)

RICH STALEY

Superintendent
Oakville School District



PEMCO ROBERT J. HANDY AWARD (MEDIUM-SIZED DISTRICT)

DR. STEPHANIE SPENCER

Director of Teaching and Learning
Vashon Island School District.



PEMCO ROBERT J. HANDY AWARD (LARGE-SIZED DISTRICT)

RON BANNER

Superintendent
Clover Park School District



PIPER SANDLER DOYLE WINTER SCHOLARSHIP

ROBERT AGUILAR

Principal
College Place School District



GALLAGHER HOWARD M. COBLE SCHOLARSHIP

SALINA MACHIDA

Assistant Principal
Battleground School District

WASA HONORARY AWARDS



REGION 101



REGION 101



REGION 105



REGION 101



REGION 111



REGION 105



REGION 111

WASA HONORARY AWARDS



REGION 112



REGION 111



REGION 112



REGION 114



REGION 111



REGION 114

WASA HONORARY AWARDS



REGION 171



REGION 171



REGION 171



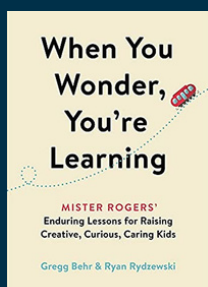
REGION 171

WASA BOOK CORNER



WHEN YOU WONDER, YOU'RE LEARNING

BY GREGG BEHR AND RYAN RYDZEWSKI



When You Wonder, You're Learning by Gregg Behr & Ryan Rydzewski has quickly become one of my favorite books of 2023! It's not complex in the words on the page but complex in how we can create a culture and environment that supports the type of learning environment we need and want in the future! Below is one of my favorite passages from the book:

"To be sure, technical expertise is still impressive...but what parents, educators, and researchers have since confirmed is that kids need more than the ability to read, write, and do arithmetic. Tomorrow's thriving adults will be the people you can go to with problems who can listen, ask questions, and help think through complex issues, who know how teams work and who can nurture other people's strengths. They'll be endlessly curious and radically empathetic." P.7

When You Wonder, You're Learning complements the vision WASA and AWSP have set for our Next Level Leaders. If you are wondering about how to take the next step in your personal or teams' leadership, please read the information provided in this edition of Hotline. It would be great to have you be a part of this two-year journey with us!

Mike Nelson, Assistant Executive Director of WASA's Professional Learning and Membership, has been with WASA since 2020. Prior to that, Mike served 35 years as a public school educator.



AASA CORNER

JOIN JED AND AASA IN GROUNDBREAKING PROGRAM TO SUPPORT STUDENTS

Join Jed and AASA to learn how you can invest in the emotional well-being of students and schools through an inaugural cohort of the District Comprehensive Approach (DCA) in Fall 2023. [Click here](#) to learn more and apply.

OREGON SUPERINTENDENT GUSTAVO BALDERAS TO BE NAMED AASA PRESIDENT-ELECT

Gustavo Balderas, superintendent of the Beaverton School District, has been elected as the 2023–24 president-elect of AASA, The School Superintendents Association, the nation's premier organization representing more than 13,000 public school superintendents nationwide.

Balderas has served as superintendent in Beaverton, Oregon, since 2022, after serving as school district leader in Edmonds, Wash., Eugene, Ore. and two California districts. He first joined AASA in 2011.

[View the press release here.](#)

AASA EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION SCHOLARSHIP

AASA's Educational Administration Scholarships were created in 1949 to provide incentive, honor, and financial assistance to outstanding graduate students in school administration who intend to make the school superintendency a career.

Seven top graduate students in educational administration receive a scholarship from AASA, The School Superintendents Association. The scholarships are given in honor of AASA's former executive directors—Worth McClure, Finis E. Engleman, Forrest E. Connor, Paul B. Salmon, Richard D. Miller and Paul D. Houston.

To review the eligibility information and FAW, [visit the AASA website](#), where applications are also available. The deadline to apply is **September 30, 2023**.

HELP AASA PROTECT FEDERAL K-12 FUNDING LEVELS

Interested in helping AASA protect federal K-12 funding? Take their fourth survey [here](#) to share your experience with the American Rescue Plan and the challenges you're facing.

2024 WASHINGTON SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR (SOY)

The 2024 Washington State Superintendent of the Year process is underway. The online application can be found on the AASA website. To be considered for Washington's SOY process, the deadline to apply is October 1, 2023. WASA will convene a panel of judges who will review and score the applications submitted to determine Washington's Superintendent of the Year for 2024.

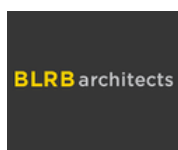
The selected candidate for Washington State will be submitted to AASA to be considered for the 2023 AASA National Superintendent of the Year to be announced at the 2024 AASA National Conference on Education, February 15-17, in San Diego, California. For information on the Superintendent of the Year program and process, visit soy.aasa.org. For questions on Washington's SOY process, contact Kaley VonVolkli at 360.489.3641.



2023 WA Superintendent of the Year, Adam Swinyard of Spokane Public Schools

THANK YOU, DIAMOND SPONSORS!

Corporate sponsorship has always been an essential element of WASA's ability to provide an exemplary professional learning and networking experience for our members at a reasonable cost. But our sponsors provide more than just resources for WASA to deliver affordable conferences, workshops, institutes, and academies. Our corporate sponsors are true partners, as they view this relationship with you as a unique and altruistic one. Thank you, sponsors!



PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

WASA places a high priority on supporting its members 24 hours a day. WASA executives are experienced, professional colleagues who are available to advise members on situations related to their roles as education leaders. Active WASA members are eligible to access the following through our Professional Assistance Program:

- Advice and Legal Counsel
- Legal Services
- Ethics Assistance
- Conflict Intervention
- Contract Review
- Mentorship

Questions? Please contact Andy Wolf. Andy can be reached at 360.489.3646 or by email at awolf@wasa-oly.org.

REFLECTIONS FROM

Retiring Superintendents

"This is the true joy in life, the being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one..."

George Bernard Shaw

Serving the community's children and families and providing support and encouragement to the staff is among the noblest of professions. As educational leaders, we are tasked with helping each child find their true joy in life. We are responsible for the resources of a trusting community, and we are given the opportunity to help everyone in the organization grow, learn, and improve. Our organizations are at the center of our communities and are responsible for much of the community's health.

Our purpose in this profession is to take children who are just learning to recognize

letters and numbers and teach them to read, compute, write, reason, persuade, cooperate, collaborate, play music, make art, dance, weld, build, and more. We transport, feed, house, clothe, teach, counsel, coach, love, and encourage them. This is our mighty purpose: to help others find their mighty purpose. To inspire ourselves so that we can inspire others. To provide our communities with people who can stand alongside us in the important work of building and sustaining a culture that is true to our founding principles.

Much has changed in our work over the last 35 years. There is no end of conflict over "more of this" and "less of that," yet the kernel of what we are about and why we do what we do is unchanged: learning. We lead learning organizations. This is why we are constantly changing and adapting. Every day and every year are different. Our ability to learn and grow makes adapting to new ways of doing and being possible.

Our really important work is done in relationships with others. It takes so many of us to really accomplish the most important work we do. Throughout this, we develop close relationships that span time and space and those memories become part of the pension. I have been fortunate to have had many of these relationships and I am grateful for them. I have found joy in life, for I have been engaged in a purpose that I consider mighty.



Chris Rust has served as Superintendent of the Toledo School District since 2015.

"Retirement" by definition means the action or fact of leaving one's job and ceasing to work. Honestly, in my book, this was something that was done by other people, not me! Upon the writing of this article, I now am finding myself a month away from school retirement. It truly has been a time for great reflection and thought.

When I do reflect, the single greatest advice I could offer is to really "lean in" to working with your colleagues. I have found over and over again, "together we are better." Comparing notes on challenging topics and having a "sounding board" for your ideas are just a couple of the great results that come from working together. Along with working with colleagues, I strongly urge early career

superintendents to seek support from our WASA organization and its team members. Time and time again, I have received support and opportunity to learn and grow from programs offered by WASA.

Secondly, five key touchstones have helped me throughout the years, they are as follows:

1. Keep focused on our single greatest client —our students.
2. Always be the voice of positivity.
3. Remember, like a lighthouse, we must be the beacon of Hope and Promise for our students and families.
4. Even when the going gets tough, never give up...keep pushing on.
5. Remember "Grit and Grace" will go a long way when seeking success for all.

Remember, make the most of everyday...the years really do pass quickly. I am deeply grateful for the many opportunities provided to me during my career in education, and the many wonderful students, families, and colleagues I have had the pleasure to meet and work with over the years. To all my colleagues, stay strong. Our public education system really needs YOU!



Suzanne Schmick, eight years as Superintendent of the St. John-Endicott Cooperative Schools, Region 101 President.

After thirty-eight years of educational service, the time has come to enjoy my next journey in life. Before I exit, I was asked to provide some words of wisdom about my twenty-five years of experience as a school administrator. Eighteen of those years were as a superintendent, nine were at the Wellpinit School District located on the Spokane Indian Reservation. The other nine were at the Medical Lake School District which proudly serves Fairchild Airforce Base. Both communities had their unique set of values and culture. However, my leadership and personal values remained consistent throughout and grew in harmony with those I served.

My advice is to read *The Four Agreements* by Don Miguel Ruiz and lead with those in mind. The agreements are to be impeccable with your word, don't take anything personally, don't make assumptions, and always do your best.

As we hear so many times, building powerful relationships is essential to the success of a superintendent. I did this by listening with sincerity and taking action for the benefit of our students and families. I made every attempt to be humble, hold a person's respect and integrity in hand no matter what the circumstances. I laughed often with others, and embraced the communities I served.

My two greatest recognitions were to be honored by the Elders of the Spokane Tribe of Indians by receiving my native name, "Salmon Chief." The other was to serve as an Honorary Commander for Fairchild Air Force Base and witness to the dedication and commitment of our military service men and women, their families, and most importantly their children. My final thought is to let your words and actions demonstrate that you honor every student, every day, and create a strong sense of belonging for all.

Tim Ames has served as Superintendent of the Medical Lake School District since 2014.



MORE REFLECTIONS FROM

Retiring Superintendents

The lessons learned during my 35 years in public education are many. Be kind. Laugh often. Care deeply and forgive easily. As a student, teacher, building administrator, and now at the culmination of a career as a superintendent, my time in public education has been one of learning and discovery. Here are three of my diamonds for those beginning their superintendency:

- **Remain Student-Focused**—Keep the focus on students. Always. Make time to visit classrooms. Build relationships with students. Host a student advisory group. A superintendent makes countless decisions during the day. While calling a snow day or deciding on the paint color for that building may seem big, it is the decisions that directly impact students that matter the most.
- **Remain Visible**—Important relationships can be forged on the sidelines of a soccer match or at the intermission of a school play. These are essential moments for students, staff, families, and the community to learn who you are as a leader. Remaining visible will help you forge relationships to sustain you through challenging moments.
- **Remain Collaborative**—The superintendency can be isolating. Develop strong, collaborative relationships with board members, educators, and administrators to help ensure that the district is operating efficiently and effectively. Share ideas. Stay connected to organizations like WASA to network, grow professionally, and find support from others in the field.

Remaining true to these three insights will help develop and maintain a successful superintendency. Stay hopeful and always continue to learn and discover throughout your journey.



Laurel Browning has served as Superintendent of the Burlington-Edison School District since 2008.

After seven years in the superintendent chair, and 38 years in public education, the thought of not "coming to school" each day hasn't really set in yet. I know I will miss the inevitable things that always bring a smile to my face. Kindergarten kids getting off the bus on the first day of school is an awesome array of smiles and happiness. Middle school lunches are amazing in so many ways, but a pure example of kids being kids at school. My personal favorite is walking into choir class and hearing those beautiful sounds. I truly believe the best part of being a superintendent is getting to be in schools where all the magic takes place.

There are many things that I was unprepared for entering the superintendency. The first is the powerful responsibility for being the lead learner for an organization and feeling the pressure to build systems where instructional quality is high. I didn't know the physical reaction of knowing that all the students are home, and the buses are back in the yard each day would be so palpable. I never knew that working with a board would be so hard

and so enjoyable at the same time. It is an incredible act of civics for boards to make decisions on behalf of thousands of students. While most of the emphasis is, and should be, on the classroom, the definition of school is broad and encompasses nearly every aspect of community life. Superintendents feel that weight as well.

I can't count the total number of lessons I have learned during this experience. To any new superintendent I would leave these simple reflections. First, never disconnect from the classroom. It is your primary responsibility, and every student deserves. The best classroom experience possible every day. Second, connect with the community. People love their local school, but we can't take that for granted. You have to manage the tug of war between tradition and what students need for their future. It can be a struggle, but your voice is powerful in terms of creating the direction to success. Third, learn how dollars enter and exit school districts. You can never have enough communication with your businessperson.

At some point we all will experience the need to tighten up on the finances and superintendents have to have strong knowledge of how the money flows. Lastly, we can do anything and have to be ready for everything. Nothing in our training and experience prepared us for a pandemic, but we endured. Being the hub of the community during hard times is part of the job and we will always be counted on to forge ahead.

Being a superintendent is the absolute best and most difficult challenge I have ever faced. It has changed me for the better and I am forever grateful to the students, staff, and community I served.



Brian Wharton served seven years as Superintendent of the Yelm Community Schools.

SAM: TRANSFORMING THE TREND



NEXT LEVEL LEADERS: SUMMER SESSION



ABOUT SIRS

Find out more about the benefits of becoming a SIRS member district.

SIRS is a nonprofit organization that provides data and information on school organization, administration, operation, finance, and instruction to specifically meet the needs of superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and school board members. SIRS contracts with WASA for management services. Andy Wolf, WASA's Assistant Executive Director for Administrative Services, serves as the SIRS Executive Director.

LEADERSHIP INFORMATION (LI)

LI is a series of monthly and quarterly articles that will help to shape and inform your educational leadership practice. These articles contain relevant school information research on the best practices

being utilized in today's educational setting. SIRS has partnered with Hanover Research to provide this service to our members.

SIRS SALARY SURVEY REPORTS

SIRS annually compiles and publishes a timely salary-and-benefits report of Washington's school employees in three parts: 1) administrators, 2) classified personnel, and 3) teachers. Only SIRS members can access the full online surveys. The Excel spreadsheets allow members to create specialized reports by grouping information for any position from any size district.

SIRS LEGISLATIVE HANDBOOK

SIRS Legislative Handbook is an annual guide to the Washington State Legislature. It provides school administrators and professional



School Information
and Research Service

associations with information about our state government including directories, website links and email addresses, legislative maps, and much more. The handbook is a valuable tool for participating effectively in the legislative process.

It is also an excellent addition for social studies classrooms and school libraries. The handbook is available [online](#) to SIRS members and can be downloaded and distributed to your staff.

CONTACT US

GENERAL INFORMATION
360.943.5717 / 800.859.9272

EXECUTIVE OFFICE
360.489.3641

Joel Aune, Executive Director | jaune@wasa-oly.org

Shawna Kiliz, Executive Assistant | skiliz@wasa-oly.org

Bella Troiani, Communications Specialist | troiani@wasa-oly.org

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS
360.489.3642

Dan Steele, Assistant Executive Director | dsteale@wasa-oly.org

Sheila Chard, Administrative Assistant | schard@wasa-oly.org

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & MEMBERSHIP SERVICES
360.489.3640

Mike Nelson, Assistant Executive Director | mnelson@wasa-oly.org

Kim Fry, Professional Learning Coordinator | kfry@wasa-oly.org

Lisa Gehman, Professional Learning/Membership Assistant | lgehman@wasa-oly.org

ACCOUNTING
360.489.3643

Eve Johnson, Business/Infrastructure Manager | ejohnson@wasa-oly.org

Kaley VonVolkli, Accounting Assistant | kvonvolkli@wasa-oly.org

MEMBER SUPPORT & ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS
360.489.3646

Andy Wolf, Assistant Executive Director | awolf@wasa-oly.org

WASA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT
Michelle Whitney, Pasco

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TREASURER
Linda McKay, NCESD 171



JUNE**June 25-27**

WASA/AWSP Summer Conference
 Davenport Grand Hotel and Convention Center
 Spokane, WA

JULY**July 23-24**

Incoming Superintendents Conference
 Marriott Tacoma Downtown | Tacoma, WA

AUGUST**August 2**

Special Education Directors PreConference
 Three Rivers Convention Center | Kennewick, WA
 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

August 3-4

MTSS Fest OSPI Integrated Conference
 Three Rivers Convention Center | Kennewick, WA

Professional Learning Opportunities

Continue your professional learning and growth with conferences, academies, and workshops from WASA Professional Learning. Find more at wasa-oly.org.

