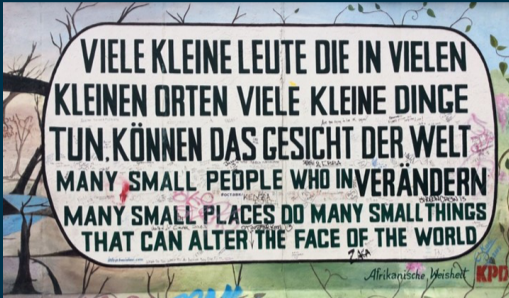


A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

As we stand at the threshold of a new year, it is with great enthusiasm and anticipation that I extend a warm welcome to each member of our distinguished organization. The arrival of 2024 brings with it fresh opportunities, challenges, and the promise of continued growth and excellence in Washington State.



Years ago, I was shown this image (above) of the Berlin Wall, and it immediately caught my eye and mind. As an administrator, I have reflected on what this message has meant to me and the work I embark on every day. The work of educating today's students requires EVERY professional doing their part to the best of their ability. It means daily doing the little things that ultimately change the lives of students and their educational experiences. Our work "alters the face of the world" by touching 1.1 million students through our leadership, trust, and advocacy.

As WASA members, we play a pivotal role in shaping the future of our educational institutions and, by extension, the lives of countless students.

In the pursuit of this noble mission, it is imperative that we uphold and embody the core principles that define the essence of leadership and progress. In this spirit, I urge each of you to embrace and live by the three goals that form the foundation of our organization—*Leadership, Trust, and Advocacy*, collectively known as the WASA Goals.

Leadership is not merely a title—it is a commitment to inspire and guide others toward a common vision. In the coming year, look to take advantage of the outstanding professional development that will be offered. Your professional growth and ability to 'alter' today's work is dependent on your ability to lead during these times.

Trust is the bedrock of any successful organization. With over 1300 active members, WASA stands ready to support you in the work you do. WASA has an incredible team that is motivated and eager to provide its members with the resources and supports they need to accomplish this important work. Spread the word.

Advocacy is the voice that amplifies and champions the needs of public education. In the coming year, WASA will be steadfast in advocating for quality education, equitable opportunities, and the well-being of our students. By actively engaging with stakeholders, policymakers, and the wider community, we can contribute to the positive transformation of the educational landscape.

As we embark on this new year, let the WASA Goals be our guiding principles. Let us work collaboratively, supporting one another in "altering the face of the world" by daily actions.

May the year 2024 be filled with success, growth, and fulfillment for each member of our organization. Here's to a year of meaningful impact and collective achievements. Wishing you a joyous and prosperous New Year!



Mike Villarreal is WASA President and Superintendent of Hoquiam School District.

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A Call to Action for All WASA Members



Friends and Colleagues,

The 2024 Legislative Session is underway and during the next 60 days, choices will be made by lawmakers that will impact your work, and most importantly the students in your schools. Decisions will be made that drive resources and policy. As school district leaders, your voice during the next two months will be critically important as these decisions are made. The power of our collective voice in legislative advocacy—all 1,300 Active WASA members speaking with one voice—cannot be overstated.

Superintendents have traditionally been the voice for schools. In recent years however, WASA has encouraged all WASA Members—superintendents and non-superintendents alike—to engage in the legislative advocacy effort to fight for schools and the students you serve.

Superintendents: Leaders of this Work

We encourage you to engage in discussions with your leadership teams regarding the significance of actively participating in legislative advocacy. Take the lead and spearhead this initiative within your school district with enthusiasm. Mobilize central office administrators and principals to share their unique perspectives, experiences, and insights to tell your district's story.

WASA Members: Expand and Broaden the Voice

Your role in this important work will add strength, volume, and credibility to our advocacy effort. We encourage you to talk with your superintendents about assisting in telling your district's story, so as to influence legislators during this legislative session. Share your on-the-ground experiences and insights, ensuring that legislators are exposed to a broad spectrum of perspectives from the field. Your active participation will amplify our voice and strengthen the effectiveness of WASA's collective advocacy effort.

Effective policy and ample resources serve as fuel for your work in delivering the optimal experience for the students in your schools. Conversely, flawed policy and insufficient resources impede your efforts to serve the students under your care. These are the decisions that lawmakers will be making during the course of the 2024 Legislative Session.

Now is the time for all of us to collectively step into this effort. Thank you in advance for doubling down on your commitment to legislative advocacy by bringing a strong and compelling voice to Olympia this winter—on behalf of the students. If we are not advocating for them, then who will?

Respectfully,

G. Joel Aune
WASA Executive Director