

NOVEMBER 2024



NEWS

The WASA News is a monthly publication that provides key information to you in a concise, quick-read format. We hope you find WASA News to be an efficient way to keep abreast of new information, emerging issues, and timely resources. Be reminded that previous issues of the WASA News can be found on our [website](#).



"Appreciation can make a day, even change a life. Your willingness to put it into words is all that is necessary."

– Margaret Cousins

Dear WASA Members,

As we enter November, a time of reflection and gratitude, I'm reminded of how appreciation shapes both our well-being and our leadership. Shawn Achor, a leading researcher on positive psychology, has found that expressing gratitude can significantly boost happiness, strengthen resilience, and enhance performance. In fact, Achor's work reveals that a culture of positivity, fostered by consistent gratitude, can transform not only individual well-being but also the collective climate of entire organizations.

Gratitude plays a critical role in building a positive environment within our schools and districts. When we, as leaders, regularly express appreciation—whether it's recognizing a team member's hard work, celebrating student achievements, or thanking community partners—we establish a culture where everyone feels valued and connected. This positive climate boosts morale, engagement, and unity, laying the foundation for a school culture where staff and students excel. And let's not forget—expressing gratitude is also good for one's soul.

As leaders, our central purpose may well be to bring out the best in those with whom we work—to help them be the very best they can be. When we foster an environment of support and encouragement, we set the stage for our teams, students, and communities to shine. True leadership is about inspiring growth, seeing possibilities in others, and giving them the tools and confidence to reach new heights.


I encourage you to engage with your leadership teams to ensure they, too, extend gratitude throughout the district. By leading with appreciation at every level, we create a ripple effect, inspiring others to embrace and share this mindset. It's a simple yet powerful way to cultivate a climate of respect, motivation, and connection across our schools.

And equally important, remember to express gratitude toward yourself. Recognize the hard work you do and the positive difference you make. Small moments of self-appreciation can renew your sense of purpose, keeping your energy and commitment strong.

At WASA, we are grateful for the opportunity to serve and support you—the leaders of public education here in Washington state. Our school districts and the students in them are in good and caring hands. Know that we appreciate you.

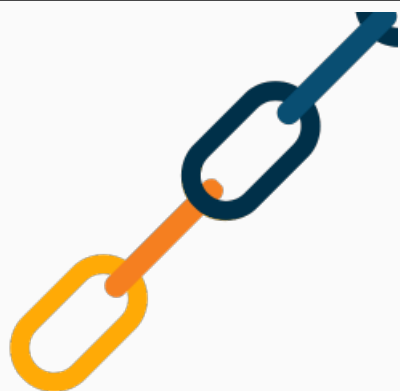
Wishing you a November abundant with gratitude and fulfillment.

Respectfully,



G. Joel Aune
WASA Executive Director

UPCOMING WASA EVENTS



[Building Conditions
Lunch and Learn](#)
Virtual



[Stevens Clay Legal
Lunch & Learn](#)
Virtual



[Women In Leadership
Lunch & Learn](#)
Virtual

November 12 | 12:00–1:00
p.m.



Winter Conference

Virtual

December 10 | 8:30–11:30
a.m.

November 19 | 12:00–1:00
p.m.



Finding Your Voice: A Legislative Advocacy Series

Virtual

December 11 | 12:00–1:00
p.m.

December 3 | 12:00–1:00
p.m.



Legislative Conference

SeaTac Hilton

January 11 & 12

REMINDERS

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 Heather Chard at hchard@wasa-oly.org if you have questions or need assistance.



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.



In case you missed the most recent edition, a link to the September WASA *Hotline* can be found [here](#).

The most recent edition of the *Hotline* features:

- Advocacy Article from Dana Rosanbach
- Inclusion article from Joey Castilleja
- Ron Banner on Student Youth Councils
- AASA Board Updates
- WA Purple Star Award articles from Kathi Weight and Ben Ferney
- Staff Spotlight on Heather Chard



EDUCATIONAL EQUITY STATEMENT



WASA EQUITY STATEMENT

WASA's Educational Statement was adopted by the Board back in April, 2022. The purpose of the statement is to publicly clarify our beliefs and vision, while reinforcing WASA's commitment to supporting you in this important work. We hope the statement will help launch or extend essential conversations in schools and districts about the kind of leadership, culture, and support needed to ensure opportunity and success for every student. View the statement [here](#).

STAY IN THE KNOW

WASA Management Reviews

WASA's Management Review service is a great way to take an in depth look at specific areas of operation within your district. Reviews are available for Business & Operations, Special Education, Teaching & Learning, Transportation, Administrative Teams, and more. The WASA Management Review process has been refined through the completion of over 130 reviews in several states and at the college and ESD levels. The overall objective of a review is to provide an expert assessment of any number of aspects within your school district management. The results are designed to be both an analysis of what is, and a blueprint for what can be. Management Reviews are conducted by review teams of recognized, expert practitioners in consultation with your school district administration. To learn more about WASA's Management Review services, contact [Tim Garchow](#).

2025–26 FAFSA/WASFA Applications

The 2025–26 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) will open on December 1, 2024. The WASFA will follow a similar timeline regarding its opening. During the delay, students and parents can still take their first step by creating their FSA ID. [The 12th Year Campaign](#) will be hosting virtual financial aid nights where students and parents can receive support creating their FSA ID. These free events will be held in English and Spanish and are open to all students. [Aim Higher Washington's](#) financial aid virtual trainings will be offered again this fall. These free trainings cover financial aid basics, financial aid navigation, and support students experiencing foster care or unaccompanied homelessness.



Next Level Leaders

Now Accepting Applications for Next Level Leaders – Cohort 2

Applications are now open for the second cohort of the Next Level Leaders (NLL) program, set to begin in the summer of 2025. Next Level Leaders is a Leadership Development Academy, specifically designed to prepare educational administrators to succeed within today's demanding environment.

This two-year learning community focuses on developing both individual and system leadership behaviors while providing a professional learning network that fosters a collaborative culture and system-wide commitment to equity.

For more information and to apply, visit www.nll.academy or contact Ashley Barker, Project Lead at ashley@nll.academy.



School Psychology Renewal for All Washington Learners (SPRAWL) Survey Research

Drs. Sisco-Taylor (Gonzaga) and Fainstein (Seattle U) are launching a state-wide survey of practicing school psychologists and administrators. The first 150

Toolkit: Moving from Conflict to Conversation

View our latest toolkit! [This webpage](#) offers a comprehensive suite of resources designed to support educational leaders in navigating controversial topics with confidence and clarity.

Developed by experts in communications, depolarization, and public engagement, these tools provide actionable strategies for managing difficult conversations, improving public perceptions of K-12 education, and fostering constructive dialogue within school communities.

Featuring courses, research-based practices, and frameworks like the Dignity Index and the Leadership Listening Cycle, these resources empower leaders to build trust, uphold dignity, and engage stakeholders effectively in today's complex educational landscape.



Frontline Webinar

Using Research-Backed Data to Drive Student Success and Boost Teacher Retention

December 5th, 2024 @ 12pm ET

Join WASA and Frontline for a webinar, designed specifically for district leaders who are committed to using data more strategically to improve student success and enhance teacher retention. Led by

respondents who complete the survey are eligible to receive a \$50 electronic gift card. The survey will take approximately 20-30 minutes to complete. Find out more and access the survey [here](#).

Kevin Agnello, PhD, Sara Thomas, M.Ed., this session will focus on two of the most critical challenges facing school leaders today: preparing students for post-secondary success and retaining top educators.

This webinar will help you:

- Focus on the right metrics
- Prioritize with purpose
- Hear from the field

[Register today!](#)

Celebrating American Education Week

American Education Week, November 18-22, is a perfect opportunity to spotlight public education and share the inspiring stories unfolding in your schools. Especially during these challenging times, sharing positive news about teachers, students, and programs is more important than ever. Celebrating your schools, recognizing the exceptional dedication of staff, and highlighting student achievements can bring much-needed positivity to your district's efforts. Click here for celebration ideas:

- [American Education Week: November 18-22, 2024](#) | NEA
- [Twenty-Five Ideas for Celebrating American Education Week](#) | Education World

Search Process for Executive Director

Last September, Executive Director Joel Aune [announced](#) his plans to retire from WASA effective June 30, 2025. Partnering with Northwest Leadership Associates, the WASA Board will conduct the search for the next Executive Director. The official posting of the opening will be issued later this fall. In the meantime, reach out to [Dennis Ray](#), [Tom Rockefeller](#), or [Joel Aune](#) if you have questions about the position.

Thank you to Dennis Ray, Northwest Leadership Associates, for offering to conduct the search free of cost.



Summer 2025: Call for Presenters

AWSP and WASA are thrilled to announce an opportunity to present at our annual Summer Conference for educational leaders on June 22-24, 2025 in Spokane!

Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Mental Health (SEBMH) Screening Surveys

The University of Washington School Mental Health Assessment, Research, and Training (SMART) Center, in partnership with the Washington State Legislature, is conducting a Landscape Analysis to understand universal Social, Emotional, Behavioral and Mental Health (SEBMH) screening implementation in Washington. Initial findings will be shared with the legislature in early December 2024, and the final report with guidance will be provided to the legislature by June 30, 2025. Each Washington Superintendent and Principal has been sent a link to a survey. If you have questions feel free to reach out to the UW SMART Center: smarttac@uw.edu.

The call for presenters is now open. This is your chance to shine at an event designed specifically for those who are passionate about shaping the future of education. Under the theme “Leadership for a New Era,” we invite school and district leaders to share their insights and experiences in one of the following impactful areas:
Fostering Collaborative Cultures
Technology Leadership in Education
Building Resilient Schools
Culturally Responsive Leadership
Transformative Leadership:
The submission deadline is [Friday, December 20, 2024](#).



School Information and Research Service (SIRS)

SIRS is a vital resource for school districts. By becoming a member, your district gains access to a wealth of information designed to support and enhance educational leadership and management. The [annual membership fee](#) for school districts is based on student FTE.

One of the key benefits of SIRS membership is our Leadership Information Articles. These monthly and quarterly publications provide up-to-date research and insights into the best practices currently shaping educational settings. The focus of this year's in-depth research project will be on student cell phone use policies.

This three-part series will include:

- 1) an overview of current research;
- 2) a benchmarking of local, state, and national policies, and ;
- 3) a practical toolkit for developing your district's own policy.

Another significant resource is the Legislative Handbook, an annual guide that equips school administrators and educators with detailed information about the Washington State Legislature. This handbook is a must-have tool.

Our SIRS Salary Survey Report offers comprehensive data on salaries and benefits for school employees across the state. This report, exclusive to SIRS members, is fully customizable and serves as a critical reference for making informed decisions about compensation.

For more information, please contact [Tim Garchow](#).



WASA, along with education associations aligned with our Platform (including AESD, WSSDA, WASBO, AWSP, and WSPTA), have been meeting with legislators for the last seven months—and will continue to aggressively advocate with returning and new legislators in the next two months until the 2025 Legislature convenes. When the Session opens on January 13, we will hit the ground running—and with our collective members’ continued engagement, we have an excellent chance of success.

[WASA’s 2025 Legislative Platform](#), a narrowly focused agenda prioritizing basic education funding, has received a generally positive reception from legislators; however, we have to keep the pressure on. We are urging the Legislature to provide full funding of Special Education, Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC), and Pupil Transportation. Each of these programs are considered “basic education” and are constitutionally required to be amply funded, yet we have clear evidence of the underfunding of these programs.

WASA will continue to provide tools, best practices, and resources to encourage and assist our members—and our partners—to effectively engage in the process. Two key resources are our education funding website and our school funding Tool Kit. The website, located at: www.waschoolfunding.org, provides useful—and easy to understand—information on the current funding dilemma so many school districts currently face. This website is intended to be “informational” and not a specific advocacy tool, so we encourage you to share this with your school board, parents, and community members.

The second resource is a [Tool Kit](#), complete with talking points, videos, social media content, and other communication resources—to assist and align our members as you engage with your own legislators. You are encouraged to regularly review the Tool Kit, as it will evolve as we continue to add resources. Recently, we added [sample templates](#) to help you display funding shortfalls (state funding vs district expenditures) of Special Education, MSOC, and Pupil Transportation in a common form. Our effort is to ensure WASA—and our partners—not only regularly engage, but also speak with one voice as much as possible. We encourage you to use the resources in the Tool Kit to advocate for WASA’s 2025 Platform.

This fall, we also put together an advocacy Lunch & Learn series. The Finding Your Voice series includes three components. Part I, presented September 25, provided a comprehensive review of WASA’s Platform. Part II, presented October 25, was an advocacy training program to assist you in being an effective advocate. Recordings and PPT presentations of each session are available on the [Conference Resources](#) section of the WASA website.

The third Lunch & Learn will provide a preview of the 2025 Legislative Session. It is scheduled for December 11; details and registration information is available [HERE](#).

Finally, we encourage you to participate in the annual WASA/WSSDA/WASBO Legislative Conference. The 2025 Conference will have a new location, new format and new timing. The Conference will be held at the Hilton Seattle Airport & Conference Center on Saturday and Sunday, January 11-12, immediately prior to the Legislature's convening. Additional information and registration is available [HERE](#).

KNOW AND LEAN ON WASA

Your Partner in Leadership Excellence

WASA is your professional association, committed to serving and supporting education leaders across the state of Washington. This year, one of our top priorities is to elevate member awareness of the resources and supports available to you.

Advocating for Public Education: WASA's voice—your voice—is respected and credible when it comes to public education here in the state of Washington. Our commitment to the 1.1 million K-12 students drives a proactive legislative strategy, this year focused on “The Big 3”: Special Education, MSOC, and Transportation. To empower members and strengthen our collective voice, WASA has developed a robust bank of [resources](#), timely updates, workshops, and tools that keep you informed and actively engaged.

With WASA's voice leading the way, we stand united to advance policies and secure resources that ensure every student is the recipient of the educational experience they need and deserve.

WASA

WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

A Community of Leaders Committed to Educational Excellence

One of the most rewarding aspects of WASA membership is the chance to connect with professional colleagues who share your commitment to educational excellence. Through a variety of events, forums, and collaborative spaces, WASA brings together education leaders to:

- Learn together, and from one another
- Share best practices and innovative solutions for today's challenges
- Engage in meaningful discussions to advance the work of school district leaders
- Build and strengthen a professional community grounded in shared values and goals to advance educational equity

Be Part of a Connected Community of Leaders ...

WASA's networking opportunities provide school administrators with a platform to foster lasting relationships, exchange insights, and collaborate on impactful initiatives that shape the future of education in Washington. Expand your network and enrich your journey in leadership by joining WASA's dynamic community today.

Do you know of an individual who would benefit from a WASA membership? Reach out and invite them today: [Link to Application](#)

RESOURCES

This month's featured resources include the following:

- [What can be learned from early adopters of AI?](#) | K-12 Dive
- [Education Department releases highly anticipated AI toolkit for schools](#) | K-12 Dive
- [Cell Phone Headaches in Middle School—Why Policies Aren't Enough](#) | Education Week
- [Binding Conditions FAQ](#) | WASA
- [School Districts in Financial Trouble: The Role of Binding Conditions & Oversight](#) | WSSDA
- [Best Practices for School District Finance Departments](#) | Hanover Research
- [Effective Supt and School Board.pdf](#) | Hanover Research and WASA
- [Transforming Strategic Plans Into Results](#) | Hanover Research
- [To Make Children Better Fact-Checkers, Expose Them to More Misinformation -- With Oversight](#) | Science Daily
- [What Makes Students \(and the Rest of Us\) Fall for AI Misinformation?](#) | Education Week

PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CALENDAR

November

- 11.12.24** Global Instructional Leadership Network | 8:30-10:00 a.m.
- 11.13.24** Aspiring Superintendent Academy | 8:30-11:30 a.m.
- 11.14.24** Special Education Directors Academy | 8:30-10:00 a.m.
- 11.15.24** Leading Your District's AI Integration | 12:00-1:00 p.m.
- 11.19.24** Complying with the OPMA Lunch & Learn | 12:00-1:00 p.m.
- 11.21.24** Aspiring Central Office Leadership Academy | 9:00-11:00 a.m.
- 11.21-23.24** WSSDA Annual Conference
- 11.22.24** WASA Superintendent Component Breakfast at WSSDA | 7:00 a.m.
- 11.23.24** 2nd & 3rd Year Superintendents In-Person at WSSDA | 7:00 a.m.

December

- 12.06.24** Leading Your District's AI Integration | 12:00-1:00 p.m.
- 12.10.24** Winter Conference 2024: Leading with Intention | 8:30-11:30 a.m.
- 12.11.24** Early Career Superintendent Academy | 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 12.11.24** WA Legislature 2025 Session Preview | 12:00-1:00 p.m.
- 12.12.24** Global Instructional Leadership Network | 8:30-10:00 a.m.
- 12.17.24** Winter Conference Follow-Up Session | 8:30-9:30 a.m.
- 12.17.24** Navigating Difficult Bargains and Strikes | 12:00-1:00 p.m.

January

- 01.09.25** Special Education Directors Academy | 8:30-10:00 a.m.
- 01.11-12.25** WASA • WSSDA • WASBO Legislative Conference | Seatac
- 01.13.25** Mentor Academy | 8:30-10:30 a.m.
- 01.13.25** Early Career Superintendent Academy | 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 01.16.25** Stevens Clay Lunch & Learn: Public Records | 12:00-1:00 p.m.
- 01.23.25** Global Instructional Leadership Network | 8:30-10:00 a.m.
- 01.23.25** Aspiring Central Office Leadership Academy | 9:00-11:00 a.m.
- 01.24.25** Leading Your District's AI Integration | 12:00-1:00 p.m.



SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

This month's Sponsor Spotlight features WASA's Diamond-level sponsors—[Frontline Education](#) and [PEMCO Insurance](#). We are grateful for their unwavering support of our members and programs! Click their link to



[Frontline Education](#)

learn more about them. View all of our amazing Diamond-level sponsors [on our website](#).



[PEMCO Insurance](#)