

OCTOBER 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](#).



*"...The best way to engage in educational advocacy is to move beyond complaining and act, by leaning in and identifying, pursuing, and promoting legislation that supports public education. I discovered that when I began writing letters, meeting with local legislative representatives, and testifying on various education related bills, I was utilizing my time and energy in a more meaningful and impactful way"*

– Bob Maxwell, WASA President, September Hotline

Dear WASA Members,

Legislative Advocacy. Historically, I have held off until December or January with my “call to action” for WASA members to engage in our collective legislative advocacy effort. But we find ourselves in a time of financial crisis. School districts across the entire state are experiencing financial difficulties of extreme magnitude, and it appears that the worst is yet to come. In an Op Ed, “[Lawmakers Must Fix Growing Funding Shortfall](#)”, published in the *Everett Herald* last month, I call for legislators to address the significant funding gaps in special education, MSOC, and transportation—now.

WASA is poised to make the strongest legislative push ever, as our advocacy efforts are already well underway, even though the Legislature will not convene its 2025 Session for another three months. Since March, we have been aggressively advocating for [WASA's 2025 Legislative Platform](#), building momentum to hit the ground running on January 13. But to achieve success, EVERYONE must engage in this critically important work, and we need that level of involvement today, and throughout the session.

The stage has been set:

- **Our Platform:** We are focused on the Big 3: Special Education, Materials, Supplies & Operating Costs (MSOC), and Pupil Transportation.
- **Strengthened Advocacy:** We've partnered with [AESD](#) and are collaborating with other education associations to rally support for the Big 3.
- **Resources:** We've launched [www.waschoolfunding.org](http://www.waschoolfunding.org), an education funding website designed to provide clear, accessible information on the current funding challenges. It's an excellent resource for your school board, leadership team, staff, parents, students, and community members.
- **Advocacy Tool Kit:** To align our members in this effort and amplify our voice, we've developed a comprehensive “[Tool Kit](#)” filled with talking points, videos, social media content, and other resources to help you engage effectively with legislators.

Our goal is simple: to ensure that WASA and our partners speak with one voice to effectively advance the Big 3.

Your engagement over the next 5-6 months will be crucial to making this happen, ***and without it we will likely fall short of securing what is needed to meet the needs of the students in your schools.***

Legislators have abdicated their paramount duty—to amply fund public education in our state. Let’s make this fall a time of action, in order to reclaim control and demand funding for K–12 so that it once again becomes THE top priority for legislators.

Together, speaking with one voice, we can make a difference.

Cheers,



G. Joel Aune  
WASA Executive Director

## UPCOMING WASA EVENTS

### WASAbot.AI Preview

**WASAbot.AI Preview**  
Virtual  
October 4 | 12:00–1:00 p.m.



**Women In Leadership Fall Kick-Off**  
Virtual  
October 8 | 8:30–10:00 a.m.



**AI Summit West/East**  
Seatac  
**West:** October 16–18  
**East:** October 17–19



**BUILDING BRIDGES**  
**Building Bridges in Education  
Lunch and Learn**  
Virtual  
October 29 | 12:00–1:00 p.m.

# 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](mailto: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**.

## Teacher Apprenticeship By Educators, for Educators

Do you know a paraeducator, emergency substitute or community member who is interested in becoming a special education teacher?

### Washington Education Association (WEA)

Apprenticeship Residency in Teaching is an innovative pathway to earn a teaching certificate with an endorsement in special education on the job while receiving a salary and benefits.

Candidates must have obtained a bachelor's degree or higher (prior to the program start date) and be available for residency (student teaching) in a partner district: Auburn, Federal Way, Issaquah, Mukilteo, Pasco, Peninsula, Sedro Woolley, Sumner-Bonney Lake or Walla Walla. Applications for 2025–26 residents are open until **October 9**.

To learn more or to apply, click [here](#).

## 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.



## AI Innovation Summit

District and building teams are invited to join education partners for the first statewide conference exploring the transformative role of artificial intelligence in Washington State's K-12 education system! Whether you're just beginning to explore AI's potential or you're already implementing AI technologies, the knowledge, strategies and collaboration shared will provide valuable insights to inform your work.

To make attending as convenient and cost-effective as possible, the AI Summit will be held simultaneously at two different venues within the state, SeaTac and Spokane. We urge all school districts to prioritize this investment in learning how AI can transform K–12 education and reclaim valuable time for educators. Learn more [here](#).



## 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](http://www.nll.academy) or contact Ashley Barker, Project Lead at [ashley@nll.academy](mailto:ashley@nll.academy).



## WALAS Annual Conference

The WALAS 3rd Annual Conference is set for **October 18 and 19** in Pasco, Washington. Join WALAS at the Red Lion Hotel & Conference Center for two days of workshops and networking with fellow administrators and superintendents. This year's theme is "Unidos en Esperanza: Inspiring Belonging and Connection." Register [here](#).

## WASA and ERNN Expand Partnership



Membership in ERNN is a great way to stay on top of the evolving landscape of employee relations. ERNN members have access to:

- Current collective bargaining agreements from around the state
- An index of legal references pertaining to bargaining
- Continually updated guidance and FAQs from some of the top attorneys in the state
- A list of attorneys who bargain on behalf of school districts
- Discounted professional learning opportunities to help prepare you for bargaining

To learn more about joining **ERNN**, or to see if your district is already a member, contact **Tim Garchow**.

## 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.



The 2025 general election is rapidly approaching—which is clear indicator the next legislative session is not far behind. If you have not yet engaged with your local legislators this fall, NOW is the time. We encourage you to meet with incumbent legislators and challengers alike. And then, continue to engage with the winners after the election.

As you meet with your legislators, we urge you to join with your school administrator colleagues, along with our education association partners, to advocate on behalf of **WASA's 2025 Legislative Platform**. Historically, this is the time we would begin initiating the process to support WASA our legislative priorities; however, this year, we fast-tracked the adoption of a narrow and focused agenda. With early adoption, we have been aggressively advocating for our Platform—meeting with legislators and collaborating with other education partners—since the end of March. We have been building momentum and will be hitting the ground running on January 13.

WASA's Platform—again, narrow and focused—requests the 2025 Legislature to fulfill their constitutional obligation to amply fund basic education. Specifically, we urge legislators to fully fund Special Education, Materials, Supplies & Operating Costs (MSOC), and Pupil Transportation.

Multiple school districts across the state are in the midst of a financial dilemma. In the long-term, the Legislature must address the many structural deficiencies in the school funding system; however, in 2025 our focus will be on immediate budget support to stop the bleeding. We know that without substantial funding action by the 2025 Legislature, school districts will be facing even more difficulties as they craft budgets next spring. This is why we are determined to aggressively pursue the WASA Platform.

To encourage and assist you in effectively advocating for the so-called “Big Three,” WASA will be providing tools, best practices, and other resources to support your advocacy. In partnership with AESD, we created an education funding website, located at: [www.waschoolfunding.org](http://www.waschoolfunding.org). The website 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.

In addition to the funding website, we have also built a **Tool Kit**—with talking points, videos, social media content, and other communication resources—to assist and align our members as you engage with your own legislators. Our effort is to ensure WASA—and our partners—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.

Another support is our “Finding Your Voice” Legislative Advocacy Lunch & Learn series. The first of three components was held on September 25. **Part I** provided a comprehensive review of WASA's 2025 Platform. The second component, scheduled for noon on October 25, will be an advocacy training program. The third component, scheduled for noon on December 11 will provide a preview of the 2025 Legislative Session. We encourage you to participate in all three webinars; however, each presentation provides distinct information, so attending all three webinars is not essential—or required. The webinars are complimentary; however, you must register to attend. [Click HERE](#) for more details and to register for the series.

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**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.

In addition to being responsive to your needs, the WASA Team is dedicated to anticipating future challenges for the members we serve. From emerging trends and legal requirements to political developments and hot topics, we consider it our responsibility to proactively inform you about potential challenges and opportunities on the horizon.

A notable example of this commitment is WASA's work in the fast-emerging world of artificial intelligence. For nearly two years we have been monitoring and learning about this rapidly advancing technology and dedicating resources to this work. We have and will continue to offer a variety of professional learning opportunities to support ALL members in their efforts to manage and leverage the power of artificial intelligence.

WASA's revolutionary AI support tools, are now available to all WASA members:

- **Leading Your District's AI Integration**—A Complimentary Monthly Insight Incubator Series
- **Artificial Intelligence Summit**—October 16–18 (SeaTac) and October 17–19 (Spokane)
- **WASAbot.AI**—Your “go-to” for prompts, custom chatbots, training, resources, and the latest AI news. Subscribe today!



**WASA** offers unmatched opportunities for professional growth, essential resources, and a strong network of peers who share your passion for advancing education. Active members have access to a myriad of benefits designed to support and enhance your role as a school administrator.



"WASA is an amazing opportunity for Washington's school administrators. Our organization is a turnkey wealth of resources and support for administrators in every stage of their careers. When you are a member of WASA, you part of a network of leaders focused on equity, leadership, and advocacy for the schools that ultimately serve our students. It is like having a full-time back office that truly cares about the success of your school systems. I sincerely believe in WASA and those that make up its memberships! We look forward to welcoming you to this great network of leaders."

—Dr. Joey Castilleja, Superintendent, Mabton School District;  
WASA Membership Committee Chair

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



This month's featured resources include the following:

- [How AI Could Benefit School Business Officials](#) | K-12 Dive
  - [AI's Potential in Special Education](#) | Education Week
  - [Don't Ignore Polarization in Classroom Election Discussions](#) | Education Week
  - [Anti-Immigrant Rhetoric has Consequences. What Schools Can Do to Help](#) | Education Week
  - [The Stress of Recess—Here's How Schools are Improving Playtime](#) | K-12 Dive
  - Are Chronic Absenteeism Interventions Working: K-12 Dive reports on a recent RAND and Center on Reinventing Public Education [survey](#) on chronic absenteeism, revealing that while attendance is improving, about one-quarter of districts found none of their strategies have been effective so far, prompting suggestions from district leaders and researchers to enhance attendance efforts.
  - Distracted Students? Understanding These 3 Myths of Attention Span Can Help: This [short article](#) explores common myths about students' attention spans and how educators might improve their efforts to capture and maintain it.
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# PROFESSIONAL LEARNING CALENDAR

## October

- 10.07.24** Working Effectively with Legal Counsel Lunch & Learn | 12:00-1:00 p.m.
- 10.10.24** Special Education Directors Academy | 8:30-10:00 a.m.
- 10.11.24** Leading Your District's AI Integration | 12:00-1:00 p.m.
- 10.16-18.24** AI Summit Westside
- 10.17-19.24** AI Summit Eastside
- 10.18.24** Global Instructional Leadership Network | 8:30-10:00 a.m.
- 10.21.24** Mentor Academy | 8:30-10:30 a.m.
- 10.21.24** Early Career Superintendent Academy | 9:30-11:30 a.m.
- 10.23.24** Aspiring Superintendent Academy | 8:30-11:30 a.m.
- 10.24.24** Aspiring Central Office Leadership Academy | 9:00-11:00 a.m.
- 10.25.24** Finding Your Voice Part II:  
The Importance of Legislative Advocacy | 12:00-1:00 p.m.
- 10.29.24** Leadership Listening Part II Lunch & Learn | 12:00-1:00 p.m.

## 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.



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**WSRMP**

## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

This month's Sponsor Spotlight features WASA's Diamond-level sponsors—**Curriculum Associates | i-Ready** and **WSRMP**. We are grateful for their unwavering support of our members and programs! Click their link to learn more about them. View all of our amazing Diamond-level sponsors **on our website**.



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