



---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**June 24, 2024**

**Contact:**     **Joel Aune, Executive Director**  
Washington Association of School Administrators  
360.943.5717  
[jaune@wasa-oly.org](mailto:jaune@wasa-oly.org)  
[www.wasa-oly.org](http://www.wasa-oly.org)

## **WASA Recognizes Outstanding Educational Leaders at the 2024 WASA/AWSP Summer Conference**

*Washington state educators celebrate successes and focus on leadership, equity, and opportunity for our state's students*

**SPOKANE — June 24, 2024—** Nearly 1,000 school superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and aspiring leaders from across Washington state gathered in Spokane this past week to attend the 42nd annual Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) and Association of Washington School Principals' (AWSP) Summer Conference.

The event also featured WASA's 2024 Honorary Awards Luncheon where WASA state-level awards and scholarships were presented.

WASA Executive Director Joel Aune expressed his enthusiasm for this year's conference, highlighting the positive impact of educational leaders on the community.

"Over the past year, our public schools have been a beacon of hope and stability, thanks to the dedication of educational leaders who tirelessly serve our students and communities," said Aune. "It is more important than ever to recognize and honor the remarkable work and contributions of all educational leaders in the state of Washington. They have demonstrated exceptional commitment and have been nothing short of magnificent."

"The 2024 WASA state award recipients exemplify outstanding leadership, contributions, and service to others and the students of Washington state each day," he added. "Their work and the manner in which they go about it are shining examples of WASA's commitment to educational equity and our core tenets of Leadership, Trust, and Advocacy. WASA's recognition program, supported by our generous long-time sponsors, aims to highlight powerful and inspiring stories of leadership and service in public education."

Those receiving WASA's prestigious state level awards this year included:

- **Tom Seigel, Superintendent, Bethel School District**—WASA Leadership Award
  - **Paul Clay, Attorney, Stevens-Clay**—Service to WASA Award
  - **Heritage University**—D.A. Davidson Barbara Mertens Legacy Award
  - **Andy Wolf, Assistant Executive Director, WASA**—Golden Gavel Award
  - **Ron Banner, Clover Park School District**—WASA Learning from Leaders Award
- Several regional awards and milestones were also acknowledged. For a complete list of WASA regional awards, visit the [WASA website](#).

### **PEMCO Robert J. Handy Most Effective Administrator Awards**

The Robert J. Handy Most Effective Administrator Awards, sponsored by PEMCO Insurance and WASA, seek to recognize outstanding public-school administrators in Washington state. One highly effective superintendent, central office administrator, or building administrator is selected from a small school district (up to 500 students), medium school district (501–2,000 students), and large school district (over 2,000 students). A \$10,500 award is equally divided among the three recipients. This year's Robert J. Handy Most Effective Administrator Awards were presented to:

- Large District: **Dr. John Parker, Superintendent, Central Valley School District**
- Medium District: **Dr. Jon Tienhaara, South Bend District**
- Small District: **Andrew Perkins, Superintendent, Thorp School District**

### **Piper Sandler Doyle E. Winter Scholarship for Administrative Leadership in Education**

The 2024 Doyle E. Winter Scholarship for Administrative Leadership in Education was presented to **Matthew Toth, Assistant Superintendent, East Valley School District**.

The Piper Sandler Doyle E. Winter Scholarship is designed to assist talented and committed educational administrators as they enhance those skills needed to serve as educational leaders in the field of public education. The scholarship was established in honor of Dr. Doyle Winter, who retired in 2002 after completing 44 years of service for Washington public schools. Winter is a former executive director of WASA and has been recognized repeatedly for exhibiting exemplary leadership ability and enhancing school administration throughout his career.

### **Gallagher Howard M. Coble Scholarship for Under-Represented Educational Leaders**

The 2024 Howard M. Coble Scholarship for Under-Represented Educational Leaders was presented to **Adina Thea, Director of Elementary Language Learning, Highline Public Schools**.

The Gallagher Howard M. Coble Scholarship is designed to assist talented, under-represented educators to pursue graduate studies that prepare for central office leadership positions. The scholarship was established in honor of Dr. Howard Coble.

### **About the Washington Association of School Administrators**

The [Washington Association of School Administrators](#) is committed to the development of quality education through professional leadership. Members benefit from a supportive community of professional leaders working to provide insightful and valuable training, support, and resources to education leaders, and to sustain a positive impact on legislative and community leaders. With over 1,980 members, membership is open to all

*education administrators in central office, building management, and educational agency positions. A not-for-profit organization, WASA is funded by membership dues and association events.*

####



WASA Leadership Award  
**Tom Seigel**  
Superintendent, Bethel SD



Service to WASA Award  
**Paul Clay**  
Attorney, Stevens-Clay



Mertens Legacy Award  
**Dr. Andrew Sund**  
President, Heritage University



Golden Gavel Award  
**Andy Wolf**  
Asst. Exec. Dir., WASA



Learning from Leaders Award  
**Ron Banner**  
Superintendent, Clover Park SD



Most Effective Administrator (Large)  
**John Parker**  
Superintendent, Central Valley SD



Most Effective Administrator (Med)  
**Jon Tienhaara**  
Superintendent, South Bend SD



Most Effective Administrator (Small)  
**Andrew Perkins**  
Superintendent, Thorp SD



Doyle E. Winter Scholarship  
**Matthew Toth**  
Asst. Superintendent, East Valley SD



Howard M. Coble Scholarship  
**Adina Thea**  
Dir. of ELL, Highline PS