

MAY 2022

# HOTLINE

A PUBLICATION OF THE WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS



## 50 Years of WASA

Celebrating five decades of transforming Washington's schools

### Equity

We adopt our Educational Equity Statement.

2

### The 2010s

The *McCleary* decision shapes much of the 2010s.

6

### Presidents-elect

Meet your 2022-23 candidates.

16

### New Beginnings

Welcome, new school administrators and superintendents! We're glad you're here.

# HOTLINE

IN THIS ISSUE OF

## GETTING CLOSER TO TODAY.

We're nearing the not-so-distant past on our journey through 50 years of WASA. The photos in this issue were taken almost entirely on cell phones. We're starting to look more like our modern day selves.

The *McCleary* decision gave us all a run for our money (Get it? Too soon?), but with steady and trusted leaders at the helm, we've navigated the rough seas.

We also witnessed forward momentum in the areas of special education, equity, and inclusion. That work continues to this day.

We adopted our core principals of Leadership, Trust, and Advocacy, which will shape our work for years to come.

Join us as we look back on the years that were just a few years ago. The 2010s are in the spotlight in this issue of *Hotline!*

*Cover collage: A peek into the 2010s from the WASA archives, featuring WASA leaders, members, and conference attendees.*

Thank you to Aaron Leavell, Alan Burke, Bill Keim, Corine Pennington, Jennifer Traufler, John Dekker, Mary Alice Heuschel, Mike Dunn, Steve Chestnut, Steve Webb, Susana Reyes, Suzanne Schmick, Tom Venable, Dan Steele, Sheila Chard, Shari Parsons, 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 **Shari Parsons**.

### Membership Matters 01

WASA President, Aaron Leavell, reflects on the supportive community our association provides.

### A Commitment to Equity 02

WASA adopts our Educational Equity Statement.

### Surrounded by Smart People 03

Corine Pennington reflects on the power of intellect and kindness in leadership.

### Spring Conferences 04

Back together in person!

### The Search for a New Leader 05

Steve Webb looks back on Bill Keim's retirement and the search for our Executive Director, Joel Aune.

### The 2010s 06

Explore the next decade of WASA's history in this issue of *Hotline*.

### Strong Leadership, Challenging Times 08

Bill Keim reflects on his time as WASA's Executive Director.

### April Board Meeting Recap 09

Highlights of our recent Board of Directors meeting.

### Wearing Many Hats 10

Suzanne Schmick reflects on the many roles superintendents play, especially in small districts.

### WASA Employee Spotlight 12

Dan Steele loves gangster movies and the Steelers. Get to know our Assistant Executive Director of Governmental Relations.

### Contact Us 13

We're here for you. Find the contact information you need!

### Professional Learning Calendar 15

### President-elect Candidates 16

Learn more about Michael Green and Mike Villarreal's education and experience.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR WASA PRESIDENT Membership Matters



Do you remember that moment when someone recognized leadership potential in you, tapped you on the shoulder and encouraged you to think about the next steps in your journey? It might have been a supervisor

or mentor planting a seed for future growth into an administrative position, or a greater responsibility. I do. I was teaching junior high school students and coaching three sports within my first year as a teacher. About halfway through year three, my principal approached me and said he didn't think I would be in the classroom very long. He asked if I had thought about becoming a principal. I remember feeling honored and appreciated to be thought of

*With a laser focus on leadership, trust, and advocacy, WASA continues to serve as the state's premier organization for district administrators.*

in this manner and to be personally invited into such an amazing level of educational leadership. Fast-forward to present day, and I am wrapping up my ninth year as a superintendent, and an incredible year as WASA President.

I joined WASA in 2009 as I moved from a building-level principal to Director of Secondary Education. What was true for me then, is still true today: knowing that an association of colleagues and mentors is here for me and strives to make my professional development and job-related knowledge and advocacy a paramount priority.

May is the time of year that districts are planning for the following school year; administrators are being hired; and central office leaders are contemplating contracts, services, and memberships for the fall. During this time, I have an ask of you: be that leader who sees an opportunity for a colleague in your region or district to be introduced to the WASA family as a new or renewed member. Immediate Past-president Talbott's goals were to increase the number of new members, retain our current ones, and to enrich the experiences and benefits that WASA members receive. As the current President, I couldn't agree more.

There have never been greater challenges in public education than the ones we face today. As educational leaders, we accept these challenges and embrace the uncharted territories of our future. It takes courage to lead educational organizations where people, time, and resources are critical factors, and we can often feel isolated in our different roles within our districts. But you do not have to lead in isolation. Through WASA's collaborative and collective approach, our 1,900 members statewide have access to and support from each other—including the skills, knowledge, and expertise of the WASA staff.

With a laser focus on leadership, trust, and advocacy, WASA continues to serve as the state's premier organization for district administrators. With your help and active participation, we will continue to meet the needs of the dynamic and evolving landscape of public education. Our 1.2 million student scholars across this great state of Washington deserve our very best efforts each day. Thank you for your selfless and courageous leadership, and thank you for encouraging others to join our great Association!

## MAY REMINDERS

### Share Your Story

We'd like to highlight *your* experience with WASA in our 50th Anniversary Celebration issues of *Hotline*. As we celebrate, reminisce, and reflect on the past 50 years, we know that none of it would have been possible without you, our members. If you'd like to share your story in the next issue of *Hotline*, please email **Shari Parsons**.

### 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** if you have questions or need assistance.

# WASA BOARD ADOPTS EDUCATIONAL EQUITY STATEMENT

## A Commitment to Equity

During their meeting on April 18, the WASA Board of Directors unanimously approved a first-ever Educational Equity Statement for the association. Executive Director Joel Aune and the Board have been discussing the idea of an Educational Equity Statement for the past 18 months. Last fall, President Aaron Leavell and the Board authorized Aune to initiate this work.

### WHY AN EDUCATIONAL EQUITY STATEMENT?

The Educational Equity Statement is aligned with WASA's overall mission and beliefs, employing clear and specific language that establishes and reinforces justification for this important work. The Educational Equity Statement will ensure that all members are aware of WASA's commitment to educational equity. It is our hope that the statement will encourage, support, and inspire school district leaders in their work to advance educational equity. And finally, the statement communicates the importance of educational equity and WASA's commitment to it—for ALL to see.

### HOW WAS THE EDUCATIONAL EQUITY STATEMENT DEVELOPED?

With the Board's permission, Executive Director Aune convened an Ad Hoc Committee last fall to provide advisement toward the development of a clear position statement for WASA regarding educational equity. The Committee was charged to develop a statement for the board's consideration that would consider diversity,

equity, cultural competency, and inclusion; keep students at the core; advance WASA's mission and beliefs with fidelity; have future use as a lens for decision-making; and be actionable. The Ad Hoc Committee was comprised of 18 school district leaders from across the entire state. The Committee's

*WASA will commit to providing vision, leadership, and support to district leaders as they take action to eradicate gaps that are a result of systemic inequities in our schools.*

composition reflected the WASA membership with representatives from different size districts and regions: Gustavo Balderas, Jennifer Bethman, Lisa Cadero-Smith, Ginger Callison, Shaun Carey, Mike Dunn, Robert Elizondo, Trevor Green, Heather Havens, Eric Hong, Sunshine Pray, Mary Seawright, Henry Strom, Mary Templeton, Mike Villarreal, Ismael Vivanco, President-elect Michelle Whitney, President Aaron Leavell, and Executive Director Joel Aune. The Committee met throughout the months of December–March, finalizing their draft for the Board's consideration in advance of the April Board meeting.

### WHAT'S NEXT?

This is articulated in the statement, "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. WASA will commit to providing vision, leadership, and support to district leaders as they take action to eradicate gaps that are a result of systemic inequities in our schools."

Following the Board meeting, WASA's annual Leaders Workshop was held on April 19. The full-day workshop, attended by WASA Board members, Region Presidents and Presidents-elect, and Ad Hoc Committee members, focused upon development of goals and priorities for WASA in 2022–23. President-elect Michelle Whitney led and facilitated this discussion, the foundation of which was the recently adopted WASA Educational Equity Statement. Goals for next year will be approved by the WASA Board at their June meeting.

In the coming weeks and months, WASA's Educational Equity Statement will be prominent in our communications and broadly disseminated to members, partners, legislators, and the community at-large. In the years to come, the Board and WASA Executive Team will utilize the statement to inform planning and center the work of the association.

## WASA'S EDUCATIONAL EQUITY STATEMENT

**Aligned with its mission and beliefs,** WASA is committed to leading, serving, and supporting current and aspiring leaders to create systems and equitable learning environments where each and every student can learn and achieve their educational goals and aspirations

**Grounded in the following definitions,** Educational Equity is embraced as the potent combination of:

...**cultural competency:** the knowledge of student cultural histories and contexts, as well as family norms and values in different cultures; knowledge and skills in accessing community resources and community and parent outreach; and skills in adapting instruction to students' experiences and identifying cultural contexts for individual students.

... **diversity:** the range of human differences within a given setting, collective, or group based on multiple factors, including but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability status, age, educational status, religion, geography, primary language, culture, and other characteristics, beliefs, and experiences.

... **equity:** 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.

... **inclusion:** the intentional actions that create and sustain belonging, safety, respect, and attention to individual needs and backgrounds to ensure all students fully engage in available activities and opportunities.

**Therefore,** 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. WASA will commit to providing vision, leadership, and support to district leaders as they take action to eradicate gaps that are a result of systemic inequities in our schools.

**This statement** will inform WASA's decision-making and future actions as it exerts its voice and influence in the areas of leadership, trust, and advocacy.

**Approved by the WASA Board of Directors April 18, 2022.**



# CORINE PENNINGTON REFLECTS... Surrounded By Smart People



There are lots of quotes about who you should surround yourself with to be successful, like people who make your heart smile, lift you higher, make you better. For me, I thought it would be best to always surround myself with smart people. For the past 20 years, my career has been in finance and operations in public education. I was always active in WASBO, the Washington Association of School Business Officials. During my time as a WASBO Board member, we began increasing our relationship with WASA for their expertise in legislative sessions. I was so incredibly impressed with the level of professionalism of the Executive Director, Bill Keim, and the skilled legislative services provided by Dan Steele, that I finagled myself a spot on the WASA Executive Board as their Treasurer. That's right...more smart people!

Dr. Keim had a leadership style that was velvety smooth, and he walked tall and bold. His editorial in the *Seattle Times* on June 11, 2017, addressed the "chaos" that

would happen if the State Salary Schedule was eliminated. He was precisely on point. When the salary schedule was eliminated in the 2018 Legislature, that summer of bargaining was brutal, and strikes were rampant across the state.

In an effort to survive the difficult legislative sessions prior to the conclusion of the *McCleary* lawsuit, WASBO and WASA established the Local Funding Workgroup in 2014. This group provided information and talking points for educating association members and legislators on the State Constitution and district funding. When the lawsuit concluded in 2018, the group was renamed the School Funding Coalition and was joined by AEA, WSSDA, AWSP, AESD, and WSPA. United, we represented the voices of nearly 8,000 school district leaders from our state's 295 school districts. To speak with one voice was historic and carried a clear message.

WASA's goals traditionally focus on **Leadership, Trust, and Advocacy**. The work of the Coalition aligned with each of these goals in such powerful and productive ways. Being just one member of this powerhouse group of individuals is one of my career highlights.

Now that I have retired, I look back on all the wonderful, smart people that I had the opportunity to learn from and enjoy. I

really need to express my appreciation for surrounding myself with people who are smart and kind.

I experienced an outpouring of kindness from all the WASA Board members and office staff; and I always appreciated Joel Aune's leadership and sense of humor. Additionally, I will forever remember my two favorite past presidents. Lois Davies was a gem, who inexplicably made me feel like I was her favorite person from day one and every day thereafter. I'm sure anyone who has met her feels the same. And for the big finish, Randy Russell, who is the hugger. Not just me, everyone was the beneficiary of his genuine care and kindness. My experience at WASA really taught me what leadership should look like.

*Corine Pennington was Assistant Superintendent of Business and Support Services in the Puyallup School District from 2011–21. She served as the Business Personnel Administrators Component (BPAC) representative to the WASA Board of Directors from 2017–20, during which time Corine was also elected to the Board's Executive Committee.*

## THANK YOU, 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, 50th Anniversary 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.

## JENNIFER TRAUFLER REFLECTS... Championing Special Education

As I reflect over the years, WASA has played a significant role in my career and in advancement of burning issues of special education administrators. I have been fortunate to have served as a regional representative and three terms as the Special Education Chair on the WASA Board. I am grateful to WASA for the support, advocacy, and networking for me personally and as a special education administrator. I have met so many amazing administrators over the years through WASA, taking notes, and aiming to emulate high caliber leadership for the field—most specifically for students.

In 2010, when I first served as a regional representative, I began working with Mack Armstrong, former Assistant Executive Director of Professional Development. Mack championed special education administrators and led regional representatives in annual conference planning. It was under Mack's leadership that we rallied together to find ways to support new special education administrators. He was quite tactical in forging political ties for partnerships in support of our voices and needs. A small but mighty team created a new special education handbook, paired with a few hours

from new administrators, in partnership with OSPI. Fast forward to the handoff from Mack to Helene Paroff. Through Helene's strategic communication and planning, we secured an annual full day of training and support for all new special education administrators in Washington.

Working with Helene, I found a fellow special educator at heart and a forever friend. Helene organized conference planning sessions with our regional representatives and, as the chair, she provided me with detailed notes and scripts for the conference—helping me to be the face (while she did the work!)—to engage with peers and presenters. A highlight in collaborating with Helene over the years was co-planning a free community event with Dr. Temple Grandin, with participation of over 1,200 people. Helene and I still enjoy pictures from that evening.

*Working with Helene, I found a fellow special educator at heart and a forever friend.*

With the support of former Executive Director Dr. Bill Keim and current Assistant Executive Director of Government Relations, Dan Steele, advocating for changes in special education were tackled and progress was made. Special education administrators throughout the state celebrated the change in the multiplier, increasing funding, and significant improvements to safety net. Simultaneously, Helene Paroff strengthened the relationship with OSPI to all new levels, continuing today and evidenced in partnerships for inclusive practices.

Thank you to current and former WASA staff, Board members, and regional representatives! We are better leaders because of you!

*Jennifer Traufler is currently the Chief of Student Support for the Renton School District. She has also held special services leadership positions in Tacoma, Auburn, Enumclaw, and Wenatchee spanning the past 20 years. Jennifer served three terms on the WASA Board of Directors, representing the Special Education Component.*

## STEVE WEBB REFLECTS... The Search for a New Leader

WASA became the preeminent voice of sensible public education policy in Washington. A tireless champion for children, educators, superintendents, and public schools, Dr. Bill Keim—Executive Director—and the WASA executive team partnered with six professional education associations to spearhead advocacy efforts. This resulted in historic state funding investments in public education—\$4 billion dollars in the last two biennial budgets as a result of the *McCleary* decision.

WASA had never been stronger. Membership had grown 17 percent since 2015 while revenue grew by 25 percent. WASA modified membership enrollment business practice to a default opt-in to AASA, resulting in additional WASA seats on the AASA Governing Board.

The WASA Board of Directors established an "equity and excellence" focus in each goal area and work plan for that year, encouraging WASA to continue to make equity an ongoing

central principle of the organization's strategic vision for the future. For example, WASA's commitment to increasing the diversity of those administrators who serve the students of Washington and, in turn, the membership of WASA, is reflected in many ways. The realization of the Dr. Howard M. Coble Scholarship for under-represented educational leaders pursuing graduate studies in educational leadership is a visible and substantial commitment to this goal. The Women in Leadership Conference continues to grow in size and impact while partnerships with other agencies foretell supports for Latino administrators in our state. These efforts contribute to retention and, ultimately, successful leadership for students.

The WASA Board of Directors also conducted an Executive Director successor search. Dr. Keim had announced his impending retirement in the previous year enabling the Board to conduct a deliberate successor search and leadership

succession plan. Mr. Joel Aune, Snoqualmie Valley School District Superintendent, was selected as WASA's next Executive Director. Dr. Keim provided on-boarding support and consultation to Mr. Aune in 2018–19 resulting in a seamless leadership hand-off. Dr. Keim served as WASA Executive Director from 2013–18.

Dr. Bill Keim led with honor, dignity, and integrity—always placing children's interest at the forefront of all decisions. His unbridled advocacy and quiet yet tenacious leadership positioned WASA and our state's public schools for the future.

*Steve Webb was Superintendent of Vancouver Public Schools from 2008–21. He served as WASA President during the 2017–18 year and was Washington State's Superintendent of the Year in 2016. Webb was also named a semi-finalist for AASA's National Superintendent of the Year.*

## TOGETHER AGAIN IN PERSON Spring Conferences



Highlights from our WASA Leaders, Women In Leadership, and Superintendent Conferences. 1: Kelly Garza (Wapato), Kurt Hilyard (Grapeview), Lisa Gredvig (Union Gap) and Ellen Perconti (Goldendale) 2: Superintendent Component Chair, Jeff Snell 3: Tracy Beckendorf-Edou (Cascade) and Brenda and Dana Anderson (Capital Region ESD 113) 4: Tara Thomas, AASA 5: Scott Barry Kaufman, Author of *Transcend: A New Science of Self-Actualization* 6: Region 108 Superintendents—James Everett (Meridian), Mary Sewright (Mount Baker), and Chris Granger (Blaine) 7: Shout out to our supportive Superintendent Conference sponsors!

## APPLICATIONS FOR COHORT II ARE NOW AVAILABLE WASA PLC at Work

Recruitment is underway for cohort two of the WASA PLC at Work. The cohort begins in August 2022. The WASA PLC at Work Project is intentional work. Learning efforts are targeted and result in a positive impact for all students. The goal of this project is to assist districts in Washington state to work smarter, not harder.

Many of our 19 cohort one districts also participated in WASA's Instructional Leadership Network (ILN) and WASA's Inclusionary Practices Project (IPP). The initiatives blend into system practices for improving instructional practices to improve student learning.

Cohort one districts reported significant improvements in their systems. "This project is helping us improve Tier I instruction for every student," said Brian Hart, Superintendent of Granger School District. Ellensburg Superintendent, Jinger Haberer, shared "This training has helped Ellensburg School District to move the implementation of WIN (What I Need Time) forward in the elementary schools and has empowered our principals and directors to lead the work of identifying essential standards."

This is an unprecedented opportunity to join your colleagues in transforming education throughout our state.

Please visit [SolutionTree.com/WASA](https://SolutionTree.com/WASA) or call Lacy Waltermeyer at 360.480.7944 to learn more.



*"By joining the PLC at Work Project, our instructional leaders gained confidence and gathered the tools they needed to support their teaching staff which has resulted in a collective shift on equitable teaching and learning practices that support all of our students."*

**Michelle Kuss-Cybula, Superintendent**  
Cle Elum-Roslyn School District

# the 2010s

## A NEW DECADE OF WASA BEGINS

The next decade in WASA's history brought with it new opportunities to strengthen our partnerships, advocate for statewide change, and deepen our commitments to equity, excellence, and professional learning.

- » New decade, new look! In 2010–11, WASA's new business plan was completed, and new branding icons (symbol, motto, and colors) were implemented. The core principles of "Leadership, Trust and Advocacy" were adopted.
- » We re-framed our goals beginning in 2014, using the lens of our association's three core principals: Leadership, Trust, and Advocacy.
- » WASA membership continued to grow, with steady gains each year. We welcomed 400 new members over the course of

the decade, reaching a new high of 1,894 members in the 2019–20 school year.

- » Our budget grew from \$2.3 million in 2001 to \$3.3 million in 2009. This growth allowed us to provide more supports to leaders, educators, students, and advocates across the state.
- » The *McCleary* decision loomed large over the early years of the decade. The "Paramount Duty" became a focus of our legislative platform for much of the decade.
- » Teacher Principal Evaluation Process (TPEP) law officially went into effect in 2013–14. The law was based on two concepts: individual growth and individual accountability.
- » We continued to partner with dozens of organizations throughout the 2010s to

support students and leaders across our state. Our work was sponsored by local and national organizations.

- » The Legislature established a Joint Task Force on Education Funding to make recommendations on how the Legislature could meet the requirements of the basic education finance reform adopted in ESHB 2261 (2009) and SHB 2776 (2010).



"New decade, new logo"

## MIKE DUNN REFLECTS... Teach the People

**Confucius left behind enduring wisdom, including this: "If you think in terms of a year, plant a seed; if in terms of ten years, plant trees; if in terms of 100 years, teach the people."**

Such sage advice is helpful, if it is heeded. As I reflect on my own membership in and experience with WASA through the years—and especially through the second decade of this century—I am cognizant and grateful that our organization channels this Chinese philosopher.

WASA has done more than plant seeds and trees, though both are important. It has consistently taken a long view and taught us all to do the same. While some organizations and individuals bounce from focus to focus, WASA has not. Through leadership and board member changes, the north star has always remained targeted on, to borrow a phrase from Tom Wolfe's book of the late 1970s, "the right stuff."

Always guided by the constitutional principle that education is our state's paramount duty, first and foremost WASA prioritizes the young people in Washington—their learning needs, social/emotional well-being, and quality preparation for the futures they will pursue. Our organization also understands that funding for and support of the professionals who serve the students is fundamental to the outcomes desired.

*Stronger now than 50 years ago; not yet as strong as what is to come.*

While it should not be difficult to "keep the main thing the main thing," the factors at odds with that goal have been many. In the wake of this, my respect for WASA is even greater. As I reflect on our organization's determined and caring leaders, its engaged board members,

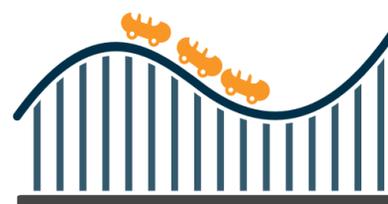
and my fellow WASA members, the admonition of George Linnaeus Banks comes to mind: "For the cause that lacks assistance, the wrong that needs resistance, for the future in the distance, and the good that I can do."

WASA keeps teaching. It fights for the right cause(s) and resists wrong-headed ideas. And WASA is ever imbued with a long view, focused on a future better than the present. Stronger now than 50 years ago; not yet as strong as what is to come. And always summoning the best in each of us.

*Michael Dunn served as Superintendent in the Cheney School District for five years before being named Superintendent of ESD 101 in 2008. Now in his fourteenth year as Superintendent of ESD 101, Michael will be retiring at the end of the 2021–22 school year.*

## ALAN BURKE REFLECTS...

# The McCleary Rollercoaster



The first half of the 2010s, from a political/legislative perspective, was all about the *McCleary* school funding case. While at OSPI as Deputy Superintendent, I worked closely with Randy Dorn and his leadership team on that topic. We always appreciated the opportunity provided by WASA to reach superintendents with the latest information, and for advocacy assistance.

**And what a roller coaster ride it was!** With *McCleary* lurking at every turn, legislative

leaders tried to out-guess and out-flank the courts as deadlines approached and the inevitable need to significantly increase school funding became more and more apparent. Bill Keim's leadership during this time was very much appreciated—particularly his sharply worded, and meticulously researched, op-eds and open letters to legislators. WASA leaders from across the state, armed with Bill's missives, and buoyed by consistent advocacy from Dan Steele and the WASA Legislative Committee, led the charge that eventually resulted in financial relief. In this effort, work from the Network for Excellence in Washington Schools, chaired by Edmonds Superintendent Nick Brossoit, was a key component of the *McCleary* campaign.

Of course, once the money came, then the equally difficult fight began to make sure that

those funds were spent properly—that is, to better educate kids. That work, as we all know too well, continues to this day.

*Alan Burke served as superintendent for Yelm Community Schools from 1998–09 and then Deputy Superintendent at OSPI from 2009–14. Alan was named Executive Director of the Washington State School Directors' Association in 2014. After three years at WSSDA, Alan became Executive Director of the Washington State School Retirees' Association, where he has served since 2017.*

## highlights OF THE 2010s

## MARY ALICE HEUSCHEL REFLECTS...

# Leadership is Influence

John Maxwell commented, "The true measure of leadership is influence—nothing more, nothing less." For its entire 50-year history, WASA has had leaders driven by the mission of making a difference in the lives of Washington youth for a better tomorrow. Leaders have served in various roles—teachers, principals, district office leaders, superintendents, and various state level leadership roles. These vast and deep levels of hands-on experience and understanding of the challenges not only brings confidence from the field in the organization, but also brings opportunities for support that would otherwise not be part of the programs and support WASA offers.

Collaboration with partners—including all the alpha soup organizations: OSPI, AWSP, WSSDA, ESDs, WEA, AASA—and many other significant leadership partners, is, and has been, core to WASA's success. The approach to collaboration of WASA leaders over 50 years has been as unique as the organizations themselves but has resulted in successes that you have read about in the other 50 Years of Excellence success stories. I am among the many, proud to be part of this organization for over 30 years in my work.

Individual contributions toward the collective whole in leading teamwork to accomplish challenging goals is the hallmark of WASA's

work. Each partnership strengthens advocacy for the work. I was blessed to engage with WASA and gain so many personal and professional friends in my years as a principal, a district office leader, my work as deputy state superintendent, working with the Legislature, a local superintendent, the Governor's office as chief of staff, and my current work in philanthropy at the Bill & Melinda Gates foundation.

Thank you for 50 years of commitment to purpose. These are such challenging times, coming out of the pandemic and addressing the recovery needs of students, their families,

*"Individual contributions toward the collective whole...is the hallmark of WASA's work."*

and educators needing system leadership and support. Simon Sinek reminds us, "Excitement comes from the achievement. Fulfillment comes from the journey that got you there." Your goals for the new millennium are challenging—but they are the right focus and will significantly influence the lives of kids by supporting leadership to advance teaching and

learning in Washington, centering on critical advocacy work.

May the next 50 years continue the legacy of leadership influence and fulfillment on the journey ahead.

*Mary Alice Heuschel served as Superintendent in the Renton School District from 2006–13 and was a National Superintendent of the Year semi-finalist in 2011. Prior to being selected superintendent in Renton, Mary Alice was Deputy Superintendent, Learning and Teaching, at OSPI from 1999–2006.*

**BILL KEIM REFLECTS...**

# Leadership In Challenging Times



It was my honor to serve as WASA's Executive Director for five years, beginning in July 2013. In addition to the routine Association work, much of our focus during my tenure was on three major

challenges facing school leaders at that time: The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), the district issues and bargaining that came along with that, and the 2012 *McCleary v. State of Washington* ruling.

The first challenge was addressing the increased learning and accountability standards created by the 2001 NCLB Act. That federal legislation required every state to bring all students up to a "proficient" level of performance by the 2013-14 school year. Ensuring that ALL students met any learning standard represented a major new challenge for schools, but under NCLB, "proficiency" was defined by much higher learning expectations than ever before. Within this law, schools were to be judged based on how their students performed on rigorous new tests. Schools and districts would be considered failing if all their students weren't proficient.

NCLB put Washington's school leaders under tremendous pressure to lead their systems through this sea change of heightened expectations. WASA stepped up for our members, providing professional learning opportunities to help develop the new knowledge and skills needed to meet this challenge. In my first year with WASA, Mack Armstrong provided effective leadership as our Assistant Executive Director guiding this work. After Mack's retirement in 2014, Helene Paroff joined the WASA team and significantly expanded WASA's professional learning opportunities designed to meet these new challenges.

This high-stakes environment intensified pressure on all parts of the system, which represented a second major challenge for WASA. During these years, we witnessed increasingly contentious bargaining, and more superintendents needing WASA's advice and counsel with thorny district problems. Our concern grew as John Dekker, WASA's lead Executive providing support for members with these issues, planned to retire.

Thankfully, the WASA Board provided a year of overlap for John and his successor to help create continuity in that important work. In 2016, Andy Wolf was selected to fill that vacancy. Andy's year of overlap with John provided a great learning opportunity and additional member assistance that could be provided by two executive staff. John Dekker provides more details about these efforts in his *Hotline* article.

The State Supreme Court's 2012 ruling in the *McCleary* case presented the Association's third major challenge during my tenure with WASA. That ruling and the pressure it placed upon our state Legislature represented the first opportunity in more than three decades to address persistent problems with Washington's school funding system. We worked hard during these years to help develop and promote unified member positions in response to various proposed legislative solutions.

For each proposal, WASA developed a deep analysis of the short and long-term impact for every school district. We utilized partnerships with OSPI, WASBO, and various district leaders to help make this information readily available and understood by our members. Those information resources were accompanied by countless discussions at various levels of the Association to develop shared positions based on what best served the needs of all Washington students.

Dan Steele did a masterful job of communicating our Association positions within the Legislature, Governor's Office, and the broader policy community. Dan also took the lead in providing WASA's input on the NEWS Board (Network for Excellence in Washington Schools) which had brought the lawsuit through the courts. WASA's voice was also strengthened through the shared voice of the WASA/WASBO Local Funding Workgroup. This group included WASA and WASBO representatives from each region, as well as state AWSP and WSSDA leaders to help broaden input.

Together, the workgroup analyzed numerous funding proposals to understand their statewide impact and develop positions which represented a broad consensus of the state's school district leaders. With this detailed understanding, the workgroup helped policy makers understand numerous negative unintended consequences that are bound to

occur with such a major rewrite of school funding laws.

While the final solution to the Court's 2012 *McCleary* order wasn't all that we sought, our involvement in the process certainly helped improve that legislation. WASA's 2017-18 President, Dr. Steven Webb, summed that outcome very well in that year's Annual Report: "...the WASA executive team have partnered with six professional education associations to spearhead advocacy efforts resulting in historic state funding investments in public education—four billion dollars over the last two biennial budgets...Looking ahead, the *McCleary* 'fix' legislated by E2SSB 6362 in 2018 raises a host of challenges."

WASA members are now living with the inequities and inadequacies created by that new school funding system. Time will tell if the state's courts will ever rule on the constitutionality of this new formula. In the meantime, WASA members will strive to make the system work for their students, and the Association will continue to support school leaders with the challenges they face in that effort.

*Bill Kiem served as WASA Executive Director from 2013-18.*

## A LOOK BACK: FOCUS ON EDUCATION

Focus on Education was initiated in 2011-12. Districts across the state invited community leaders; city officials; legislators; and parents to district led school visits/classroom learning walks and other activities during November to:

- Highlight the great work schools are doing.
- Share their vision of public education.
- Build community support.

## APRIL MINUTES IN BRIEF

# Board Meeting

### The Board approved the following:

#### Consent Calendar

- April 2022 Comparative Membership Report
- January 2022 WASA Board Minutes
- Winter and Legislative 2022 Conference Financials
- January 2022 Balance Sheet, Trial, and Income Statements

#### The Executive Director's Report included

- Building Sale Proceeds—Budget Designation
- WASA 2021-22 Goals, Tasks, and Actions Review

#### Action items

- WASA Appointment to the VEBA Board
- WASA Investment Policy (Tabled until the June Meeting)
- WASA Educational Equity Statement

### WASA Assistant Executives reported on

- Legislative Session Update
- Legislation and Finance Committee
- Member Support
- ERNN
- SIRS
- Member Services
- Management Reviews
- Quick Facts Since the January Board Meeting
- What's Next in Professional Learning

The June 25 WASA Board meeting will be in conjunction with the WASA/AWSP Summer Conference at 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

## CELEBRATING LEADERS

# Award Recipients

### Robert J. Handy Most Effective Administrator Awards

#### Small Districts (less than 500)

- 2012 Norma Hudson, Columbia SD
- 2013 Tina McDonald, Stevenson-Carson SD
- 2014 Aaron Fletcher, Liberty SD
- 2015 Karen Wirkkala, Naselle-Grays River Valley SD
- 2016 Donald Wayne Vanderholm, Manson SD
- 2017 Linda Martin, Thorp SD
- 2018 Chad Prewitt, Davenport SD

#### Medium Districts (501-2000)

- 2012 Barry DePaoli, Chelan SD
- 2013 Glenn Johnson, Cashmere SD
- 2014 Kristen Sheridan, North Mason SD
- 2015 James Everett, Meridian SD
- 2016 Josephine Moccia, South Whidbey SD
- 2017 Diane Hull, Bridgeport SD
- 2018 Ken Russell, Riverside SD

#### Large Districts (2001+)

- 2012 Dennis Haddock, Lakewood SD
- 2013 Richard Cole, Sunnyside SD
- 2014 Linda Masteller, Sumner SD
- 2015 Carl Bruner, Mount Vernon SD
- 2016 Thomas R. Hagley, Vancouver PS
- 2017 Joyce Stewart, Everett PS
- 2018 Janel Keating Hambly, White River SD

### Dr. Doyle E. Winter Scholarship for Administrative Leadership in Education

- 2010 Patrick Dehuff, Easton SD
- 2011 William Wadlington, Creston SD
- 2012 Christine Moloney, City University of Seattle
- 2013 Michaela Miller, Teacher and Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP), OSPI
- 2014 Andrew Schwebke, Tumwater SD
- 2015 Brian Hart, Sunnyside SD
- 2016 Rebecca Miner, Shoreline SD
- 2017 Heather Sanchez, Lake Washington SD
- 2018 Deirdre Fautleroy, Seattle PS

### WASA Leadership Award

- 2010 Jane Gutting
- 2011 Richard McBride
- 2012 Monte Bridges
- 2013 Jim Kowalkowski
- 2014 Steve Myers
- 2015 Chrys Sweeting
- 2016 John Dekker
- 2017 Rich McBride
- 2018 Jim Kowalkowski

## PRESIDENTS OF THE 2010s

WASA members elected ten outstanding presidents to lead WASA into a new millennium with changing student and school needs. Presidents of the 2000s were fierce advocates for students, administrators, and public education.

- 2010-11 Sandra Hill
- 2011-12 Joel Aune
- 2012-13 Paul Sturm
- 2013-14 Mike Nelson
- 2014-15 Michelle Price
- 2015-16 Frank Hewins
- 2016-17 Lois Davies
- 2017-18 Steve Webb
- 2018-19 Randy Russell
- 2019-20 Krestin Bahr

## EXECUTIVE LEADERS OF THE 2010s

### Executive Directors

- Paul Rosier, 2007-13
- Bill Keim, 2013-18
- Joel Aune, 2018-present

### Assistant Executive Directors

- Barbara Mertens
- Mike Boring
- Dan Steele
- John Dekker
- Andy Wolf
- Mack Armstrong
- Helene Paroff

## LEARNING WITH WASA IN THE 10s

We continued to offer new, innovative professional development opportunities to our members in the 10s, including:

- Women in Leadership Conference
- WASA/WSSDA/AWSP Equity Conference
- WASA/OSPI Mentor Academy
- Inclusionary Practices Project for Students with Disabilities
- Winter Conference
- Special Education Directors' Academy
- Superintendent & CFO Conference
- Early Career Superintendent Academy
- Incoming Superintendent Conference
- Aspiring Superintendents Academy
- Washington Educators' Conference
- Student Scheduling for District and Building Teams
- Teacher and Principal Evaluation Program
- Human Resources Workshops
- Lunch and Learn Series: Thinking and Leading into the Future

## SUSANA REYES REFLECTS:

# Equity and Inclusion

When I think about the early 2010s and WASA, I remember my last few years as the Assistant Superintendent for the Pullman School District and later in the 2010s, as the Assistant Superintendent for the Mead School District, where I was the special education component chair for the Eastern Washington region. I recall a lot of learning about WASA's work and support for our learners who receive special education services. As a school principal, you don't get to see the level of work that our administrative leaders engage in to ensure that our school systems have what they need to care for and support our students' learning needs. I remember thinking how wonderful it is that we have such dedicated professionals looking out for our students' best interests statewide. It sure made me proud and honored to be a part of this work.

Another truly wonderful memory is the focus on equity that continued to evolve into the late 2010s. The best experience I had in this regard was when I attended a WASA workshop

facilitated and presented by Dr. Rebecca Miner and Dr. Tanisha Brandon-Felder. It was focused on the work that Shoreline School District was doing in this area of equity. I remember sitting in the room and being completely amazed and impressed by their work. It was so impactful for me as a person of color, a Mexicana. I will always remember this workshop. It was, ultimately, one of the experiences that led me to Shoreline. Thank you, Dr. Miner and Dr. Brandon-Felder! And thank you, WASA!

*Susana Reyes served as Assistant Superintendent of the Pullman, Mead, and Pasco school districts for 15 years. She is currently Superintendent of the Shoreline School District.*

## SUZANNE SCHMICK REFLECTS...

# Wearing Many Hats

What do the following things have in common: applying an ice pack in the health room, covering a classroom of learners, answering the switchboard phone, mopping a floor, serving lunch, interviewing candidates for employment, and taking a seat at the board meeting?

Did you guess they are all a part of a day in the life of a rural school superintendent? On any given day, a small school superintendent truly "wears many hats;" I wouldn't have it any other way!

My "many hat" wearing days began in 2015, when I was asked to serve as the St. John-Endicott Cooperative Schools superintendent. The cooperative schools (15 miles apart) are located sixty-five miles south of Spokane, in rural Whitman County farm country. After thinking, "What have I gotten myself into..." I reached out to the WASA office in Olympia and quickly was connected to the New Superintendent Workshop. The training I received at this workshop set a strong foundation for my start-up, as well as current work as a superintendent.

Working in a small rural school has the potential to be isolating. Often times, the

superintendent is the answer to many job descriptions and programs. The opportunity to talk with WASA has been a true blessing when a sounding board; professional development; training; contract and negotiations support are needed.

During the last two years, leading both small and large districts took on a whole new challenge. Standing tall and bright like a lighthouse in a stormy night,

*"Wearing many hats" has its challenges, yet the rewards are far greater! Small schools benefit in a big way from the service mission of the WASA organization.*

WASA helped members make the shift in our educational service model. Phone conversations with the WASA office always were helpful and deeply caring. The "Lunch

**SUPERINTENDENT**  
Teacher  
Nurse  
Custodian  
FOOD SERVICE

and Learn" trainings were so very timely and "spot on" in terms of our greatest needs for our staff and students. I know our St. John-Endicott Cooperative staff groups gained invaluable practical skills and ideas for working outside the walls of our brick-and-mortar sites. To date, these skill sets continue to act as a strong basis for our ongoing work with our K-12 students.

"Wearing many hats" has its challenges, yet the rewards are far greater! Small schools benefit in a big way from the service mission of the WASA organization. I know for a fact that education is made stronger by partnering with WASA. I remain deeply grateful for this partnership and the opportunity to focus all students on a positive, productive, and hopeful future.

*Suzanne Schmick has served as Superintendent of the St. John-Endicott Cooperative Schools since 2015. She has been elected to serve as President-elect of WASA Region 101 next year.*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Officers

**President:** Aaron Leavell, Bremerton  
**President-elect:** Michelle Whitney, Pasco  
**Past President:** Brian Talbott, East Valley  
**Secretary:** Jennifer Bethman, Bethel  
**Treasurer:** Linda McKay, NCESD 171

### Regions

**101** Jake Dingman, Oakesdale  
**105** Henry Strom, Grandview  
**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** Wade Smith, Walla Walla  
**171** Tracey Beckendorf-Edou, Cascade

### Components

**BPAC:** Sarah Thornton, Pasco, chair | Melissa Beard, Steilacoom, chair-elect  
**IPAC:** Jennifer Bethman, Bethel, chair | Jenny Rodriguez, Yakima, chair-elect | Linda McKay, NCESD 171, past chair  
**Principals:** Matt Yarkosky, Bethel, chair  
**Special Education:** John Sander, Franklin Pierce, chair  
**Superintendents:** Jeff Snell, Vancouver, chair | James Everett, Meridian, chair-elect | Deb Clemens, North Thurston, past chair

### Liasons

**AASA:** Kevin McKay, ESD 105 | Michelle Price, NCESD 171 | Nathan McCann, Ridgefield | Krestin Bahr, Peninsula  
**Higher Ed:** Marge Chow, City University  
**OSPI:** Michaela Miller  
**PESB:** Alexandra Manuel  
**Retirees:** Rick Anthony  
**SBE:** Susana Reyes, Shoreline  
**WIAA:** Doug Burge, Zillah

## REGION PRESIDENTS

**Region 101** Travis Hanson, Deer Park  
**Region 105** Jinger Haberer, Ellensburg  
**Region 108** Mary Sewright, Mount Baker  
**Region 109** Dana Geaslen, Edmonds  
**Region 110** Ron Thiele, Issaquah  
**Region 111** Michael Farmer, Dieringer  
**Region 112** Mary Beth Tack, Kelso  
**Region 113** Brian Wharton, Yelm  
**Region 114** Marty Brewer, Port Angeles  
**Region 123** Michelle Whitney, Pasco  
**Region 171** Tracey Beckendorf-Edou, Cascade

# New WASA Members

We've welcomed eight new members since February 2022.

Our newest class of WASA members joins nearly 2,000 members from across the state. Collectively, they represent diverse districts from every corner of Washington State.

Sarah B. Gregory, Chewelah SD  
Kevin P. Knight, Colville SD  
Rob Darling, Yakima SD  
Karl T. Olson, Arlington PS  
John H. Belcher, Snoqualmie Valley SD  
Niki R. Fischer Meyers, Seattle PS  
Philip A. Mackey-Moseley, Port Townsend SD  
Brad L. Wilson, Lake Chelan SD

# Incoming Superintendents

Please join us in welcoming these incoming superintendents for the 2022-23 school year. We look forward to supporting you in your new role.

**Jeffrey D. Thake**, Aberdeen SD  
**Lynnette Blackburn**, Brewster SD  
**John Anzalone**, Camas SD  
**John Parker**, Central Valley SD  
**Ben Ferney**, Cheney SD  
**Brian Freeman**, Curlew SD  
**Becky Berg**, Eastmont SD  
**Aaron Kombol**, Easton SD  
**Rebecca Miner**, Edmonds SD  
**Steve McCullough**, ESD 123  
**John Boyd**, Evergreen PS - Vancouver  
**Kristi Dominguez**, Ferndale SD  
**Ivan Duran**, Highline PS  
**Heather Tow-Yick**, Issaquah SD  
**Israel Vela**, Kent SD  
**Brad Wilson**, Lake Chelan SD  
**David VanderYacht**, Lynden SD  
**Bruce Todd**, Mansfield SD  
**Zachary Robbins**, Marysville SD  
**Fred Rundle**, Mercer Island SD  
**Monty Sabin**, Moses Lake SD  
**Robert Roettger**, ESD 101  
**Michelle Kuss-Cybula**, Oak Harbor PS

**John Bruce**, Odessa SD  
**Aaron Leavell**, ESD 114  
**Joe West**, Paterson SD  
**Nikolas Bergman**, Quincy SD  
**Susan Leach**, Riverview SD  
**Jennifer Bethman**, Rochester SD  
**Brent Jones**, Seattle SD  
**Regan Nickels**, Sequim SD  
**Kevin McKay**, Selah SD  
**Ryan Maxwell**, Sunnyside SD  
**Angela Allen**, Toutle Lake SD  
**Jerry Lewis**, Trout Lake SD  
**Scott Harrison**, White River SD  
**Guy Strot**, Wishram SD

## A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP IN WAPATO



The WASA Superintendents' Conference also served another purpose this year: an impromptu alumni gathering. Not only are Ed Hatzenbler, Henry Strom, Susana Reyes, Kelly Garza, Peter Finch, Kristi Dominguez, and Bulmaru Ruiz all Washington superintendents (and WASA members), they are also all alumni of Wapato High School. "I am proud to stand with my fellow Wapato High School alumni," said Hatzenbler. "Thank you to the teachers and staff that helped nurture and guide us along the way." Wolfpack power!

FEATURING DAN STEELE

# WASA Employee Spotlight



**In this issue, we're proud to spotlight Assistant Executive Director, Governmental Relations, Dan Steele. Dan joined WASA in July 2010.**

"When the Legislature proposes new policy for our schools, Dan is often my first call in understanding the impact for students. He's particularly skilled at thinking through any benefit or consequence for schools. The K-12 advocacy community looks to Dan for leadership."

*Melissa Gombosky, Gombosky Public Affairs*

*What does your job entail at WASA?*

I represent WASA and bring its members' perspectives to the State Legislature, advocating for school district interests.

*What do you like most about your job?*

Sine Die is my favorite holiday! Actually, the best is the worst. The context within which I do my job changes on a frequent and regular basis. Every day is different, and there really isn't a regular, specific, or even predictable routine.

*How has WASA changed since you were hired?*

We do more professional development beyond the standard and predictable conferences and events. We have more direct member contact with relevant, useful, and timely information. We are very deliberate and intentional in how we approach our work, and I believe there is depth and strong substance to the support we provide members.

*What were you doing before you were hired at WASA?*

I worked in a very similar capacity at WSSDA.

*What is your favorite memory at WASA?*

I would say when Mack Armstrong got pulled over outside of Wenatchee with a number of WASA staff in the car. When Mack said we were coming from an educators' conference, the officers remarked that he wasn't being a good

role model. That, and the day I called Sheila Chard and asked her to come to WASA and join our team.

*What do you like to do when you aren't working?*

Sleep and golf—I don't play as much as I would like to. I like a good book or a good movie, and pizza. And of course, 17+ weeks out of the year when the Pittsburgh Steelers are playing football.

*Best vacation ever?*

Six Flags Magic Mountain, where we rode every single ride multiple times for 12 hours straight. It wasn't a busy time of year and there were no lines.

*Where's your favorite place in the world?*

Disneyland. Isn't that the happiest place on Earth?

*What are your favorite movies or music?*

Movies: Gangster (*Godfather, Casino*) and Sci-Fi (*Blade Runner, Dune*). Music: Heavy Metal and Progressive Rock.

*Do you have story about a former staff member that WASA members might enjoy?*

Barbara Mertens—I worked with her for many years while I was at WSSDA and she with WASA. She was the consummate professional. I learned a lot from her. She really was the Queen of legislative relations.

TOM VENABLE REFLECTS...

# Standing on the Shoulders of Giants

In a letter written by Isaac Newton in 1675, he stated, "If I have seen further, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants."

Thought to be an original thinker by many, myself included, I later learned that Newton's statement wasn't entirely his own. The idea that we stand on the shoulders of those who came before us was not new. In fact, it can be traced back to a twelfth century author, John of Salisbury, who wrote that philosopher Bernard of Chartres compared people to dwarves perched on the shoulders of giants, stating, "we see more and farther than our predecessors, not because we have keener vision or greater height, but because we are lifted up and borne aloft on their gigantic stature."

Acknowledging there are "giants" in every

profession, the field of education is no different. As a first-year superintendent, this could not have been more evident than in the spring of 2014, while attending my first WASA Superintendents' Conference. It was shortly following my arrival that I found myself sitting at a dinner table listening to an insightful conversation about timely and relevant educational topics that could not have been replicated or taught in a course. Rather, it was a dialogue that could only take place within a gathering of educational leaders—where the collective wisdom of those who I would soon refer to as mentors was on full display.

Recognizing I was clearly surrounded by greatness—wide-eyed, and awestruck—a close friend, colleague, and mentor leaned over and

stated, "This is what it means to be a WASA member. We are sitting amongst some of the giants in our profession tonight. They have learned from those who have preceded them. They are true legends of the profession who have made it their own. We are all standing on the shoulders of giants."

Later that evening, attempting to absorb all that I had just experienced, I found myself flooded with a deep sense of gratitude and appreciation, not only for my colleagues, but for what I had come to know of WASA—a transformative, equity-driven organization, working tirelessly to bring educational leaders together, lifting each of us to see more and farther.

Happy 50th Anniversary WASA!

*Tom Venable was WASA Region 171 president in 2018-19, and has served as Superintendent in Methow Valley since 2013.*

JOHN DEKKER REFLECTS...

# A Legacy of Support

Upon joining the WASA team in 2001 as Assistant Executive Director, and over my 16-year tenure, I had the unique opportunity to work in support of four WASA Executive Directors, each of whom were visionary leaders. My role at WASA included three areas of responsibility: direct service to members, liaison to the WASA Small Schools Committee, and emergency support to school district administrators. I feel particularly blessed to have had the privilege to serve school district leaders!

In 2010, WASA leaders met to reflect on our mission and to re-brand, refresh, and clearly articulate the organization's purpose. The tag line **Leadership | Trust | Advocacy** was born defining the history and the hallmark of the organization to this day. Few decades have tested the resolve of school district leaders and WASA more than the second decade of the 21st century.

Criticism of public education and calls for public funding of private education deflected attention from the central issue: that public education was significantly underfunded. Calls for improved funding and fair teacher pay were often met with increased regulation, greater expectations measured by standardized testing, and teacher and administrator evaluation reform . . . but without additional funding.

WASA took the lead advocating for equitable, sustainable, and ample state funding with the Stable Funding Committee, the Local Funding Workgroup, and joining partner organizations, including the School Funding Coalition. Those efforts provided a rubric by which to judge various legislative funding initiatives. WASA advocated for funding solutions that served districts east-to-west and small-to-large.

District leaders faced tremendous challenges to match fiscal resources with the needs of employees whose compensation had lagged behind the private sector. Following the *McCleary* lawsuit and subsequent changes to basic education funding, Legislators reported to the public that the school funding dilemma had been addressed and even implied that districts were "flush with cash." Districts faced the reality that new basic education funding had been largely offset by reductions in categorical revenues and new restrictions to raising funds locally. Many districts were simply unable to meet employee expectations at the bargaining table. As WASA's "point person" to assist districts facing potential employee strikes, the requests for assistance increased from three or four per year to dozens by 2015.

WASA increased its capacity to support districts by partnering with AWSP, WSSDA, and ERNN to deliver bargaining crisis resources through regional workshops. Andy Wolf joined

the WASA team in 2016 to partner with me in support of districts facing imminent strikes. To meet the communication challenges districts face in crisis, WASA partnered with WSPRA to develop SCAN (School Communication Assistance Network), a network of communications experts who stand ready to quickly assist districts facing emergencies of all types.

Andy came on board and "hit the ground running," to continue WASA's legacy of support to school district leaders across the state. Whether it is Management Reviews; employment contract reviews; Board/superintendent relations support, or crisis intervention, WASA stands ready to serve.

Each decade has its unique challenges but WASA's resolve to serve through leadership, to promote support of public education through advocacy, and to earn the trust of its members, and the public at large will continue to be its hallmark.

*John Dekker was on staff 16 years as Assistant Executive Director at WASA. Prior to joining the WASA team in 2001, John served seven years as Superintendent in the Rainier School District.*

## WASA LEADERS WORKSHOP



<h3>CONTACT US</h3> <p><b>GENERAL INFORMATION</b> 360.943.5717 / 800.859.9272</p> <p><b>EXECUTIVE OFFICE</b> 360.489.3641</p> <p>Joel Aune, Executive Director   jaune@wasa-oly.org Shari Parsons, Executive Assistant   sparsons@wasa-oly.org Bella Troiani, Communications/Production Support itroiani@wasa-oly.org</p> <p><b>GOVERNMENT RELATIONS</b> 360.489.3642</p> <p>Dan Steele, Assistant Executive Director   dsteele@wasa-oly.org Sheila Chard, Administrative Assistant   schard@wasa-oly.org</p>	<h3>PROFESSIONAL LEARNING &amp; MEMBERSHIP SERVICES</h3> <p>360.489.3640</p> <p>Mike Nelson, Assistant Executive Director   mnelson@wasa-oly.org Lisa Gehman, Professional Learning / Membership Assistant lgehman@wasa-oly.org</p> <p><b>ACCOUNTING</b> 360.489.3643</p> <p>Eve Johnson, Business/Infrastructure Manager ejohnson@wasa-oly.org Kaley VonVolkli, Accounting Assistant   kvonvolkli@wasa-oly.org</p> <p><b>MEMBER SUPPORT &amp; ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS</b> 360.489.3646</p> <p>Andy Wolf, Assistant Executive Director   awolf@wasa-oly.org</p>	<h3>WASA OFFICERS</h3> <p><b>PRESIDENT</b> Aaron Leavell, Bremerton</p> <p><b>PRESIDENT-ELECT</b> Michelle Whitney, Pasco</p> <p><b>PAST PRESIDENT</b> Brian Talbott, East Valley-Spokane</p> <p><b>SECRETARY</b> Jennifer Bethman, Bethel</p> <p><b>TREASURER</b> Linda McKay, NCESD 171</p>
---	---	---



## STEVE CHESTNUT REFLECTS...

## Generations of Progress



School funding issues have been a priority for WASA throughout its fifty-year history, and advocating for increased funding from the Legislature has been a challenge for each generation of WASA members.

Carol Whitehead served as WASA President in 2005–06 and improving legislative funding for all school districts was her highest priority, as well as the highest priority for the WASA Board and staff. Together with WASA staff, Carol put together a toolkit for WASA members entitled “Generations of Progress” which clearly showed that the Legislature was not fulfilling its “paramount duty.” The toolkit was well received and put a spotlight on this longstanding issue. When I became WASA President in 2006–07, the Board and I

believed that we needed to continue pressing this issue, so we developed a second toolkit entitled “Generations of Progress II.” My favorite memory from that two-year initiative was a joint press conference in Olympia that included WASA, AWSP, WSSDA, PSEA, and WEA leaders speaking with one voice and asking the Legislature yet again for a new K–12 funding model. I believe this was the first time that all five organizations issued a joint statement on an educational issue, and it seemed that progress on school funding was gaining momentum. It was very gratifying to see the *McCleary* case filed in 2007 (a lawsuit against the state for not meeting its constitutional obligation to amply fund K–12 education), and in 2009, I was one of thirteen superintendents who were subpoenaed to explain how the current broken funding system negatively impacted the Moses Lake School District. It was very exciting to see the Supreme Court issue a supportive ruling on *McCleary* in 2010, followed

by the Supreme Court upholding that decision in 2012. Despite progress that has been made on K–12 funding, there is still much work to be done for the state to truly fulfill its “paramount duty.” Addressing this issue will continue to be a challenge for future generations of WASA members.

During my 27-year administrative career in Washington, WASA played a key role in my success. I learned from individual WASA members and from WASA professional development opportunities. Thanks to WASA for 50 years of outstanding service to its members!

*Steve Chestnut served as Superintendent in three school districts from 1991–2012. He was elected WASA President in 2006–07 and named Washington State Superintendent of the Year in 2010.*

## NATIONAL SUPERINTENDENT OF THE YEAR

## Applications Open Now!

Nominations and applications are now open for the 2023 National Superintendent of the Year. This program is designed to recognize the outstanding leadership of active, front-line superintendents. It is not recognition of service at retirement or a program to reward current state or national leaders. Each candidate for the National Superintendent of the Year Award must first be named by their state association as the State Superintendent of the Year.

Each State Superintendent of the Year is assessed on the following criteria:

- **Leadership for Learning:** creativity in successfully meeting the needs of students in his or her school system.
- **Communication:** strength in both personal and organizational communication.
- **Professionalism:** constant improvement of administrative knowledge and skills, while providing professional development opportunities and motivation to others on the education team.
- **Community Involvement:** active participation in local community activities and an understanding of regional, national, and international issues.

The deadline to apply for the 2023 Washington Superintendent of the Year is October 30, 2022. The selected superintendent’s application will be then submitted to the National Superintendent of the Year.

To submit an application or make a nomination, visit [soy.aasa.org](http://soy.aasa.org).

Contact Shari Parsons, at 360.489.3641, or visit the [AASA website](http://AASA website) with additional questions.

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.

## BECOME A LIFE MEMBER

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

## MAY

**May 18**  
WASA/WSSDA/AWSP Equity Lunch and Learn Statewide Workshop  
Zoom | 12–1 p.m.

**May 20**  
Inclusionary Practices Project Webinar: UDL & SDI and Building Successful General Ed and Special Ed Partnerships  
Zoom | 8:30–11:30 a.m.

**May 23**  
PLC at Work Project District Leadership Workshop  
Zoom | 8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

**May 24–25**  
Inclusionary Practices Project District Team Convening Four Points by Sheraton Seattle Airport South 9 a.m.–3:30 p.m.  
*Teams will be designated for participation on either May 24 or May 25*

**May 26**  
Central Office Leadership Academy  
Session 8 of 8 | Zoom | 8:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

## JUNE

**June 1**  
Aspiring Superintendents Academy  
Session 11 of 12 | Zoom | 9 a.m.–12 p.m.

**June 2**  
Special Education Director Academy  
Session 6 of 6 | Zoom | 8:30–10 a.m.

**June 9**  
Instructional Leadership Network Statewide Conference  
Four Points by Sheraton Seattle Airport South 8 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

**June 22**  
Aspiring Superintendents Academy (Capstone Presentations)  
Session 12 of 12 | Zoom | 2–4:30 p.m.

**June 24**  
WSLA Statewide Summer Workshop  
Davenport Grand Hotel | 8:30 a.m.–3 p.m.

## JULY

**July 24–25**  
Incoming Superintendent Conference  
Four Points by Sheraton Seattle Airport South

**July 28–29**  
Special Education Pre-Conference  
Four Points by Sheraton Seattle Airport South

**July 31–August 1**  
WASA Back-to-School Rally  
Four Points by Sheraton Seattle Airport South

## AUGUST

**August 1**  
IPP Project Information  
Zoom

**August 2–3**  
RULER Training  
Four Points by Sheraton Seattle Airport South

**August 4–5**  
MTSS/Integrated Conference  
Zoom

**August 9–10**  
WASA PLC at Work  
Zoom

**August 17**  
IPP Superintendent Onboarding  
Zoom

**August 31**  
IPP New Teams  
Zoom

## OCTOBER

**October 2–3**  
WASA Fall Conference  
Four Points by Sheraton Seattle Airport South

## Professional Learning Opportunities

Continue your professional learning and growth with conferences, academies, and workshops from WASA Professional Learning. Find more at [wasa-oly.org](http://wasa-oly.org).

# MEET THE CANDIDATES 2022-23 PRESIDENT-ELECT



*Michael Green*  
**SUPERINTENDENT  
WOODLAND SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Superintendent | Woodland Public Schools (2007–Present)
- Superintendent | Nine Mile Falls SD (2001–07)
- Assistant Superintendent | Riverview SD (1998–01)
- Elementary School Principal | Edmonds SD (1993–98)
- Elementary School Principal | Mattawa SD (1991–93)
- Classroom Teacher | Sultan SD (1988–91)
- Classroom Teacher | Lake and Peninsula SD (AK) (1985–88)

## EDUCATION

- BS, Business Administration | Central Washington University
- BAEd, Elementary Education | Central Washington University
- MAEd, Educational Administration | Western Washington University
- Superintendent Credential | Seattle Pacific University

## WASA SERVICE

- WASA Mentor—*I have been privileged to twice serve in the role of mentor to new superintendents in our region.*
- WASA Region 112 President-elect (2021–22)

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES & RECOGNITION

- ESD-112 Superintendents' Advisory Council
- Board Member and President Cowlitz-Wahkiakum Council of Governments
- Board Member and President Rotary Club of Woodland Washington
- Board Member and President Woodland Washington Chamber of Commerce



*Mike Villarreal*  
**SUPERINTENDENT  
HOQUIAM SCHOOL DISTRICT**

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Superintendent | Hoquiam SD (2017–Present)
- Director of Federal and State Program | Othello SD (2016–17)
- Assistant Superintendent | Othello SD (2007–16)
- Principal | Warden SD (1999–07)
- Sixth Grade Teacher | Warden SD (1998–99)
- Third Grade Teacher | Warden SD (1995–98)
- Paraeducator | Provo Utah SD (1993–95)

## EDUCATION

- Doctor of Education | Washington State University
- Superintendent Certification | Washington State University
- Principal Certification Master of School Administration | Heritage University
- Master of Professional Development Bilingual Education/ESL | Heritage University
- Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education | Weber State University
- Associate of Arts | Utah Valley Community College

## WASA SERVICE

- Superintendent Mentor (2021–Present)
- Advisory Committee for WASA Position Statement on Educational Equity (2021–Present)
- WASA/OSPI Superintendents Roundtable (2021–Present)
- WASA Superintendent of the Year Selection Committee (2021–22)
- Central Office Leadership Framework Workgroup (2013–14)
- IPAC Component Chair (2012–13)
- Liaison Administrator, WASA Region 171 (2003–06)
- WASA Member (1999–Present)

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES & RECOGNITION

- Grays Harbor and Pacific County Superintendent Organization | Member (2017–Present)
- Washington State University, Spokane | Board Member, Advisory Committee for Principal Preparation (2015–17)
- Staff Developer and National Presenter | Achievement via Individual Determination (AVID) (2013–19)
- Big Bend Community College | Board Trustee, Vice Chair (2012–17)
- Southeast Leadership and Assistance for Science Education Reform | Board Member (2012–17)
- Washington State Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development | Executive Board Member (2010–13)
- Excellence in Teaching Award | North Central ESD (1996)