

SEPTEMBER 2023

# HOTLINE

A PUBLICATION OF THE WASHINGTON ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS



## You Belong

Read about Ferndale's You Belong campaign

05

## 2024 Legislative Platform

Advocacy is a year-round effort

09

## Next Level Leaders

Hear first-hand what makes NLL so great!

15

**WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL, SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS AND SUPERINTENDENTS!**

We're glad you're here.

# HOTLINE

IN THIS ISSUE OF

## WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL WITH WASA!

The summer heat is wearing off throughout the state, and the fall breeze is edging closer, which can only mean that school is in full swing for many of us!

WASA welcomes you back to your students and community with a greeting from WASA President Mike Villarreal and Executive Director Joel Aune.

In this edition of *Hotline*, Joel Aune brings up the idea of being a lighthouse as a leader. We take a look at all that we do as leaders to create beacons of light for our students and staff. We remember always that small acts of kindness and compassion can have far-reaching consequences.

Take a look inside to learn about all the opportunities available to you. We are here to support you, our members, throughout the school year.

Thank you for your support and all you do for your community. Each one of you is a lighthouse of hope, leadership, and kindness.

Welcome back to school!

Thank you to Mike Villarreal, Joel Aune, Kristi Dominguez, Jennifer Bethman, Dan Steele, Peter DeWitt, Joey Castilleja, Inger Owen, Asha Riley, Kaley VonVolkli, Shawna Kiliz, Lisa Gehman, Sheila Chard, Kim Fry, Mike Nelson, and Bella Troiani for your contributions to this issue of *Hotline*.

Do you have an idea for our next *Hotline* issue? Send an email to Bella Troiani at [itroiani@wasa-oly.org](mailto:itroiani@wasa-oly.org).

### A Message from Your President 03

WASA President Mike Villarreal reflects on 29 years in education and welcomes members to the new school year.

### Meet the Staff 04

Meet the WASA staff behind all things membership, professional learning, and government relations!

### Fostering Belonging in Ferndale 05

Hear from Kristi Dominguez on how Ferndale SD has created a community of belonging for students.

### WASA Goals and Actions 06

Learn about WASA's mission statement and action steps for this year.

### Equity Statement 08

Jennifer Bethman of the Rochester SD reflects on advocacy for equity.

### Legislative Platform 09

Dan Steele introduces the 2024 legislative platform.

### Book Corner 10

Dr. Peter DeWitt writes about *Unreasonable Hospitality* for this month's WASA Book Corner.

### New WASA Members and Superintendents 11

Welcome to the new WASA members and new WA superintendents!

### AASA Corner 13

Keep up to date with the newest information from AASA.

### AASA Governing Board 14

Get to know your AASA Governing Board!

### Next Level Leaders 15

Inger Owen tells the story of Next Level Leaders.

### The Impact of ILN 16

Asha Riley reflects on the Instructional Leadership Network.

### Celebrating Michelle Whitney 17

WASA celebrated past president Michelle Whitney this summer.

### President-Elect Results 18

Say hello to your new president-elect, Bob Maxwell!

### Staff Spotlight 19

We sit down with WASA Accounting Assistant Kaley VonVolkli.



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Some years ago, I had the opportunity to visit my parents, who were living in Buenos Aires, Argentina. On one of our afternoon walks, I found myself standing at the edge of the Hipódromo Argentino de Palermo, a beautiful horse racing facility that spans over 150 acres. Opened in 1876, the dirt course at the Hipódromo Argentino de Palermo is considered one of the finest in the world and hosts over 1,400 races a year.

As I stood at the side of the track, I closed my eyes and breathed in the smell of freshly turned dirt that mingled with the tang of grass and hay from nearby stables. In the distance, the sound of thundering hooves and the rhythmic cadence of a jockey urging his mount forward rolled and crescendoed until the sounds were all-consuming. And then suddenly, from one moment to the next, all was silent as horse and rider vanished into the distance.

It was exhilarating! It was magical! My heart beat so loud that I felt it in my head, and for a moment, I was overcome by a sense of awe at the sheer power and grace of the horses. It was an experience that I will never forget.

I had a similar experience the first time I stepped into a classroom. One afternoon, by invitation from Dr. Richard Aslett, I visited a Kindergarten classroom at Timpanogos Elementary School. Dr. Aslett, who was a family friend, taught elementary education classes part time at Utah Valley University and part time Kindergarten.

As I sat at the back of the classroom, I watched, captivated, as Dr. Aslett taught a reading lesson to a class of multilingual Spanish-speaking students. The students gathered around him on the carpet and practiced letter sounds and words in English. The lesson progressed from simple skill practice to students reading sentences, learning vocabulary, discussing ideas, and making real-world connections.

It was exhilarating! It was magical! Like at the Hipódromo Argentino de Palermo my heart beat so loud that I felt it in my head, and for a moment, I was overcome by a sense of awe at the sheer power and grace of the learning process. It was at that moment that I realized my calling in life was to become a teacher. Years later, Dr. Aslett would tell me that he

knew if I had the opportunity to witness learning in its purest form I would choose a career in education. He was right.

As I enter my 29th year as an educator, I reflect upon the many experiences and defining moments that have given me opportunities to lead and serve. I am extremely grateful for this journey!

Within the next few weeks, thousands of students and staff will enter our schools, filled with excitement and anticipation of what this school year will bring. Anchored in leadership, trust, and advocacy, WASA members have the opportunity to lead and influence in long-lasting ways. Let us reflect upon our defining moments and remember why we chose this career path. This is important work, and the work we do changes lives!



Mike Villarreal,  
WASA President and  
Superintendent of  
Hoquiam SD.

## A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR Who Will Say, “YOU Are My Lighthouse?”



WASA Friends and  
Colleagues,

Congratulations on the successful launch of another school year! While getting school started each year is “what you do,” success

in this regard does not happen by accident—effectively organizing, leading, and mobilizing staff to welcome hundreds, if not thousands, of students back to school is no small feat.

Now that school has started, the real work begins—forging the kind of connections with students that poise them for success. The foundation of this work is rooted in relationships and putting forth extra effort to make a difference in the lives of students and even the staff with whom you work. These “differences” may seem small or inconsequential at the moment, but they are often life-changing. Steve Pemberton calls this the Lighthouse Effect, and his book, *The Lighthouse Effect: How Ordinary People Can Have an Extraordinary Impact in the World*, is fully applicable to the work of educating children and young people.

Just as the Lighthouse stands tall, lighting the way for fatigued sailors, you, too, have the potential and opportunity to be beacons for students, teachers, staff, and colleagues. Pemberton’s book reminds us that ordinary people with a genuine desire to make a difference can have an extraordinary impact on the lives of others. All of you serve as a Lighthouse to those you interact with, if for no other reason than the position you hold. You are a guiding light, even when you’re not fully aware of the influence you have on others.

This year, I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity to be a Lighthouse. And check out Pemberton’s book. Ordinary people, by simply taking time to encourage and support others, can be life-changers. As leaders, remember that you can make an extraordinary impact. *The Lighthouse Effect* teaches us that small acts of kindness and compassion can have far-reaching consequences. As school district leaders, you can promote a culture of appreciation and acknowledgment, celebrating the achievements of students, staff, administrators, and colleagues.

*The Lighthouse Effect* serves as a powerful reminder of the impact we can have on the lives of those we serve. As you begin this new year, I challenge you to renew a commitment to being beacons of light for students, staff, and fellow administrators—guiding those with whom you come in contact toward brighter and more promising futures.

*You are a guiding light,  
even when you’re not fully  
aware of the influence you  
have on others.*

Much of leadership is about bringing out the best in others. What an opportunity you have to be a bright and shining Lighthouse. This year, who will say, “**YOU** are my Lighthouse?”

Respectfully,

G. Joel Aune  
WASA Executive Director

# Meet the Staff

## EXECUTIVE OFFICE



### JOEL AUNE

#### Executive Director

Joel has been with WASA since 2018. Prior to this, Joel served as Superintendent for 20 years in the Snoqualmie Valley and Colfax School Districts. He also previously served as an elementary principal in the Walla Walla SD and as an assistant principal and teacher in the Cashmere SD, where he began his career in 1983. In 2011, Joel was elected WASA President.



### SHAWNA KILIZ

#### Executive Assistant

Joining the team in 2023, Shawna has more than twenty years of experience providing administrative support to superintendents, principals, and board members within the Washington State education system.



### BELLA TROIANI

#### Communications and Production Support

Bella joined the WASA team in October 2021. Prior to joining WASA, Bella had several years of experience with WSU and Washington State RCW.

## ACCOUNTING



### EVE JOHNSON

#### Business & Infrastructure Manager

Eve has capably served at WASA for over 35 years, since joining the staff in 1985.



### KALEY VONVOLKLI

#### Accounting Assistant

Kaley started at WASA in March 2022. Prior to coming to WASA, Kaley worked as an Accounting and Card Servicing Specialist. She graduated with her bachelor's degree in June 2022.

## PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & MEMBERSHIP



### MIKE NELSON

#### Assistant Executive Director

Prior to joining the WASA staff in 2020, Mike served 35 years as a teacher, principal, curriculum and instruction director, assistant superintendent, and superintendent. For the last 21 years, he has served in the Enumclaw SD where he was born and raised—with over 13 of those years as Superintendent. In 2019, he was selected as the Washington State Superintendent of the Year.



### KIM FRY

#### Assistant Executive Director

Kim brings 32 years of experience in education to WASA, most recently 12 years as superintendent of the Rochester School District. During the course of her career, Kim served as a first grade teacher, principal, and assistant superintendent. Kim started at WASA in 2022.



### LISA GEHMAN

#### Professional Learning/ Membership Assistant

Lisa has been on the WASA staff since 2016. Prior to that, she served in the U.S. Air Force as an Information Manager for 12 years.



### RYAN HICKMAN

#### Professional Learning Assistant

Ryan joined the WASA staff in August 2023. Ryan earned a Bachelor's degree in Education, after which he proudly served in the U.S. Navy as a Training Program Manager for five years.

## GOVERNMENT RELATIONS



### DAN STEELE

#### Assistant Executive Director

Dan has served as WASA's Governmental Relations lead since 2011. He has many years of varied legislative experience, including service as the executive director of the Washington Student Lobby, a statewide organization that advocates on behalf of Washington's public university students, and as a legislative assistant with the Washington State Senate. Prior to joining WASA, Dan served the state's locally elected school board members for over 13 years with the WSSDA.



### SHEILA CHARD

#### Administrative Assistant

Sheila came on board at WASA in 2011, after working with Dan Steele at WSSDA from 2005–11.

## MEMBER SERVICES & ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS



### ANDY WOLF

#### Assistant Executive Director

Andy, who came on board at WASA in 2016, brings more than 30 years of teaching and education leadership experience to his role with WASA. He spent the first 19 years of his career working in various roles with the Wahkiakum School District. For the last 13 years, he served as a principal, assistant superintendent, and superintendent in Yelm.



### NATALIE PLOTT

#### Office Assistant

Natalie joined the WASA staff in September 2023. She earned her Associate's Degree in 2014 and worked as a Resource Paraprofessional for six years in the Olympia School District.



# Fostering Belonging

## THE STORY OF FERNDALE'S YOU BELONG CAMPAIGN



**As the newly appointed Superintendent of the Ferndale School District, I embarked on a journey to unite our community and create an environment where every student, staff, and member of the community felt a deep sense of belonging.** Little did I know that this mission would evolve into an inspiring campaign that would touch the hearts of everyone involved.

When I first examined our student data, the numbers were concerning; only about 32 percent of our students felt a genuine sense of belonging. This was particularly alarming as we were emerging from the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs reminded me that before we could focus on academic achievements and self-actualization, we needed to lay the foundation of belonging.

Our *You Belong* campaign was born out of a desire to rally our staff, students, and community together, breaking down barriers and fostering a culture of inclusivity. The campaign commenced with a [kick-off video](#), bringing everyone together during a district-wide 'pep' assembly to welcome back our dedicated staff. #YouBelong became our



rallying cry as we worked tirelessly to capture and showcase [the moments that exemplified belonging](#).

Generous contributions from three local businesses allowed us to purchase You Belong t-shirts for each staff member. Thus, 'You Belong Wednesdays' came to life, a day where a sea of staff proudly wore the shirts, welcoming everyone who stepped foot into our district with open arms and hearts.

*When I first examined our student data, the numbers were concerning; only about 32 percent of our students felt a genuine sense of belonging.*

To encourage recognition and appreciation, we introduced the Belonging Awards. Staff members could nominate their colleagues for their contributions to fostering a strong sense of community and belonging. I cherished the opportunity to surprise the deserving nominees and personally present them with a You Belong Award, a simple gesture that carried a powerful impact.

Beyond the messaging, I knew it was essential to immerse myself in the daily experiences of our schools and classrooms. By December, I had visited every school, department, and classroom, witnessing the incredible work being done on behalf of our students. Through



our carefully crafted social media campaign, we proudly shared these moments, weaving together the story of our organization's commitment to belonging.

The impact of the You Belong campaign has been profound. Our community has grown stronger, relationships have deepened, and a palpable sense of belonging now permeates through every corner of our district. We've seen increased student engagement, improved morale among staff, and a renewed passion for learning. We have seen this mindset expand to our student leaders. In a recent [WSSDA article](#), Ferndale's student board representative shared, "My ultimate goal of being a student rep is to ensure one more student than yesterday feels like they belong. We need to be there for each person; that is my mission."

As we continue this journey, we know that fostering a sense of belonging is an ongoing commitment. The You Belong campaign has become more than a tagline; it has become a way of life for us. As Brene Brown reminds us,

*"Fitting in is about assessing a situation and becoming who you need to be to be accepted."*

*Belonging, on the other hand, doesn't require us to change who we are; it requires us to be who we are."*

Together, we will continue building a community where every individual feels valued and respected for who they are because in Ferndale School District, #YouBelong.



*Kristi Dominguez is Superintendent of the Ferndale School District.*

# WASA 2023–24 Goals and Action Steps

*In the June 24th meeting, the WASA Board gave their approval to the Goals and Actions for 2023–24. These goals are firmly rooted in the Association's mission and core values of Leadership, Trust, and Advocacy. The development of these goals and actions is heavily influenced by WASA's adopted Educational Equity Statement. To set the implementation in motion for this year's priorities, Executive Director Joel Aune and his staff have been diligently working on creating tasks aligned with each action throughout the summer.*

## Leadership

Cultivate transformative leaders who model and exert a visible and determined focus on educational equity to effectively lead public education in their communities.

**Action A:** Design and deliver professional learning for all component members, supporting both individual leadership and systems-level improvement to ensure equity and excellence for each student.

**Action B:** Develop pathways for all district-level positions that attract leaders who reflect the diversity of our student populations.

**Action C:** Leverage the expertise within each administrator through collaboration with one another and our educational partners to address complex educational challenges.

## Trust

Lead with integrity to build trust and advance a sense of belonging, cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion to achieve excellence in public education.

**Action A:** Build and expand relationships with and among WASA members and other stakeholders to develop and sustain ethical, visionary leadership for public schools and the students in them.

**Action B:** From a position of equity, communicate and engage through words, actions, and deliverables to build a unified voice among members, partner organizations, and the general public regarding the value of public education and a system where all students can learn and achieve their educational goals and aspirations.

**Action C:** Provide service, support, and leadership for WASA members, state agencies, educational organizations, and other stakeholders to elevate the sense of belonging for all students and eradicate opportunity and achievement gaps that are a result of systemic inequities in our schools.

## Advocacy

Amplify WASA's voice and influence to champion public education in an inclusive democracy so that each student achieves their educational goals and aspirations..

**Action A:** Provide leadership and support for ongoing relationships and engagement with legislators and other policymakers to influence legislation and education policy that promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion to ensure opportunities for each student to achieve successful outcomes.

**Action B:** In a unified and compelling voice, advance and influence budget and policy positions that support the provision of consistent, equitable, and ample resources to all school districts that will ensure fair treatment, equitable access, and opportunity for each student to achieve successful outcomes.

**Action C:** Actively influence federal policy to positively impact each student.

## WASA Mission Statement

The Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) is an organization for professional administrators that is committed to **Leadership**:

Leadership in providing equity and excellence in student learning

Leadership in developing competent, ethical, and visionary leaders by:

1. Promoting community and legislative support for education
2. Providing member services
3. Offering growth opportunities for leaders

WASA's beliefs are anchored in Leadership, Trust, and Advocacy. WASA is, first and foremost, about Leadership for equity and excellence for all students.

WASA members exemplify Trust through competence, integrity, and vision. WASA's Advocacy efforts focus on building widespread support and a singular voice to secure the resources and policy necessary to advance public education in the state of Washington.

## The Meaning Behind the Logo

The WASA Logo, adopted by the Board in 2021, is a representation of the three foundational pillars of WASA—Leadership, Trust, and Advocacy, along with a commitment to Equity that threads through all we do at WASA.

The color blue represents trustworthiness, maturity, security, and reliability, while gold promotes optimism and hope. The gradient effect shows movement both forward and upward as we envision a future full of possibility for WASA and for you.





# WASA BOARD OF DIRECTORS



*WASA Board Members at their June meeting in Spokane.*

## OFFICERS

**President:** Mike Villarreal, Hoquiam  
**President-elect:** Bob Maxwell, Pullman  
**Past President:** Michelle Whitney, Pasco  
**Secretary:** Chrys Sweeting, Arlington  
**Treasurer:** Linda McKay, NCESD 171

## REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

**Region 101:** Jake Dingman, Oakesdale  
**Region 105:** Curt Guaglianone, Mount Adams  
**Region 108:** Michelle Kuss-Cybula, Oak Harbor  
**Region 109:** Chrys Sweeting, Arlington  
**Region 110:** Shaun Carey, Enumclaw  
**Region 111:** Laurie Dent, Sumner-Bonney Lake  
**Region 112:** To be filled.  
**Region 113:** Patrick Murphy, Olympia  
**Region 114:** Dana Rosenbach, North Mason  
**Region 123:** Jim Jacobs, North Franklin  
**Region 171:** Tracey Edou, Cascade

## NEXT BOARD MEETING

The next WASA Board meeting is Wednesday, October 1. This will be held at the Marriott Tacoma Downtown from 1–3 p.m.

## COMPONENTS

**BPAC:** Sarah Thornton, Pasco (Chair)  
Jill Pratt, Rochester (Chair-elect)  
**IPAC:** Linda McKay, NCESD 171 (Chair)  
Denise Daniels, Fife (Chair-elect)  
Jenny Rodriguez, Yakima (Past Chair)

**Principals:** Matt Yarkosky, Bethel (Chair)

**Special Education:** John Sander, Franklin Pierce (Chair)

**Superintendents:** Mary Templeton, Washougal (Chair) | Joey Castilleja, Mabton (Chair-elect) | James Everett, Meridian (Past Chair)

## LIAISONS

Liaisons are non-voting.

**AASA:** Krestin Bahr, Peninsula

**ESDs:** Aaron Leavell, ESD 114

**Higher Education:** To be filled.

**OSPI:** Michaela Miller

**PESB:** Erica Hernandez-Scott

**Retirees:** Alan Burke, WSSRA

**SBE:** Susana Reyes, Shoreline

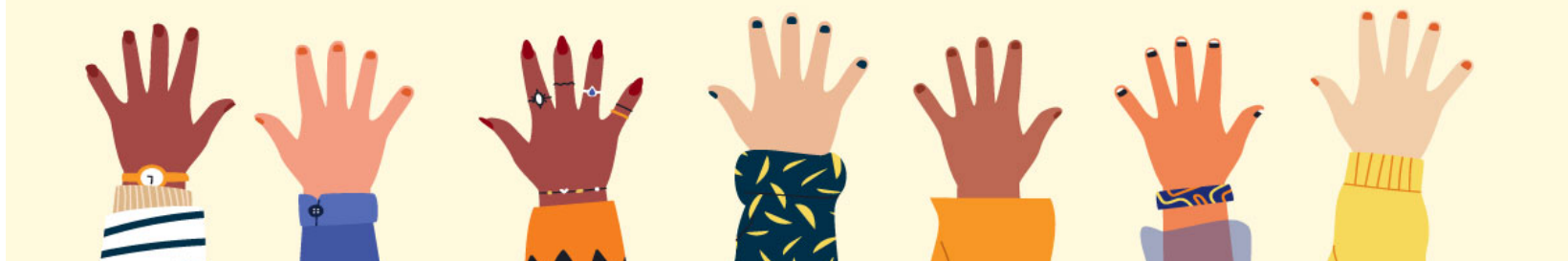
**WIAA:** MaryBeth Tack, Kelso

## REGION PRESIDENTS

**Region 101:** Ben Ferney, Cheney  
**Region 105:** Joey Castilleja, Mabton  
**Region 108:** David Forsythe, NWESD 189  
**Region 109:** Chrys Sweeting, Arlington  
Deborah Rumbaugh, Stanwood  
**Region 110:** To be filled.  
**Region 111:** Kevin Alfano, Fife  
**Region 112:** Amy Huntley, Ocean Beach  
**Region 113:** Byron Bahr, Rainier  
**Region 114:** Tim Winter, South Kitsap  
**Region 123:** Thaynan Knowlton, Clarkston  
**Region 171:** Tabatha Mires, Waterville

# EDUCATIONAL EQUITY 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.*



WASA's Educational Equity Statement, adopted by the Board last April, articulates WASA's commitment to providing leadership while supporting superintendents and school district leaders as they lead for equity. 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.

The statement further defines cultural competency, diversity, equity, and inclusion—all essential elements of educational equity. In this issue of Hotline, Rochester School District Superintendent Jennifer Bethman shares her thoughts on inclusion...

**Equity isn't just about fairness—it's also about inclusion.** As educators, we need to ask ourselves if our classroom practices meet the needs of all students. Creating safe spaces where young individuals can thrive, regardless of their backgrounds, is crucial.

What is inclusion? It's about fostering behaviors that make everyone feel accepted, respected, and valued. Inclusion ensures every student accesses opportunities and benefits equally. Inclusive classrooms bridge gaps between "haves" and "have-nots" and create a culture that inspires all kids to engage in learning.

An inclusive classroom embraces students with disabilities, linguistic differences, varied religions, and diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. It's about unity in learning, where every student's uniqueness enriches the whole.

Inclusion sets high expectations for all students, aligns instruction with standards, and offers choice, options, and tailored support. It's my belief that with proper backing, all classrooms can be inclusive, meeting every student's needs.

Our path to inclusion involves a shared vision, teacher empowerment, and collaboration. As we strive for inclusivity, we're embracing equity, continuous learning, and nurturing belonging.

Inclusive practices aren't optional; they are imperative for crafting better learning spaces for all our kids. By fostering classrooms where each student finds acceptance and learns alongside their peers, we sow seeds for broader societal change.

Inclusion isn't a distant goal; it's an immediate responsibility. We possess the means to embrace every student. Let's champion inclusion and shape a brighter, fairer future for all learners.



*Jennifer Bethman is Superintendent of the Rochester School District.*

## About SIRS

**Find out more about the benefits of becoming a SIRS member district.**

SIRS is a nonprofit organization that provides data and information on school organization, administration, operation, finance, and instruction to specifically meet the needs of superintendents, central office administrators, principals, and school board members. SIRS contracts with WASA for management services. Andy Wolf, WASA's Assistant Executive Director for Administrative Services, serves as the SIRS Executive Director.

### **LEADERSHIP INFORMATION (LI)**

LI is a series of monthly and quarterly articles that will help to shape and inform your educational leadership practice. These articles contain relevant school information research on the best practices being utilized in today's educational setting. SIRS has partnered with Hanover Research to provide this service to our members.

### **SIRS SALARY SURVEY REPORTS**

SIRS annually compiles and publishes a timely salary-and-benefits report of Washington's school employees in three parts: 1) administrators, 2) classified personnel, and 3) teachers. Only SIRS members can access the full online surveys. The Excel spreadsheets allow members to create specialized reports by grouping information for any position from any size district.

### **SIRS LEGISLATIVE HANDBOOK**

SIRS Legislative Handbook is an annual guide to the Washington State Legislature. It provides school administrators and professional associations with information about our state government, including directories, website links and email addresses, legislative maps, and much more. The handbook is a valuable tool for participating effectively in the legislative process.



It is also an excellent addition to social studies classrooms and school libraries. The handbook is available online to SIRS members and can be downloaded and distributed to your staff.



# WASA Adopts 2024 Legislative Platform

## ADVOCACY IS A YEAR-ROUND EFFORT



### WASA PRESENTS... FINDING YOUR VOICE: UNPACKING WASA'S 2024 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

FEATURING DAN STEELE

SEPTEMBER 21 | 12–1 P.M.

**On June 24, the WASA Board of Directors took action to adopt the Association's Legislative Platform for the 2024 Legislative Session.**

As recommended by WASA's Legislation & Finance Committee, the Platform addresses school administrator, school district, and student needs. The Platform is closely aligned with WASA's goals, including a clear emphasis on educational equity.

The 2023 Legislature provided additional investments and policy changes to address K–12 education concerns; however, many urgent, ongoing concerns were not addressed (for full details of this year's session, see WASA's comprehensive [2023 Legislative Report](#)). WASA's Platform is comprised of six planks that express school administrators' priorities for the upcoming 2024 Legislative Session:

- Advance equity
- Fully fund special education
- Fix pupil transportation
- Provide consistent and equitable education resources
- Update staffing allocations
- Support capital facilities

WASA's adopted [2024 Legislative Platform](#) describes in greater detail the specific issues for which we will be advocating. We encourage you to review the Platform—and share these priorities with your legislators. As you review WASA's established priorities, you might view them as being rather ambitious. Our priorities are “stretch” goals, to say the least; however, there is a specific reason for that. WASA's legislative strategy is to be bold and honest, advocating for what our students and school districts NEED—not simply what we think we might be able to achieve. We firmly believe that if we ask for anything less than what is necessary to support our students and staff, we are doing our school districts

and our members a disservice. Certainly, we will analyze the legislative landscape and will likely have to temper our expectations—and it may be necessary to tweak our approach or messages—but if we ask for less than what we actually need, we will never truly be successful. Additionally, we will continue to play the “long game,” building momentum and laying the groundwork for future success.

*WASA's legislative strategy is to be bold and honest, advocating for what our students and school districts NEED—not simply what we think we might be able to achieve.*

The 2024 Legislative Session will not convene for another five months; however, legislators are already in the process of researching and developing their own personal and caucus priorities. Advocacy is a year-round effort, and meeting with legislators well before the session begins allows you to strengthen (or begin) your relationships with your elected officials—and provides an opportunity to influence their thinking before their legislative priorities are established. Early in July, WASA disseminated our Platform to all legislators—we encourage you to follow up with them soon before your window to influence diminishes.

Also, note that the 2024 Session is the second-year of the 68th Washington State Legislature. It will be a “short” session, limited to sixty days. Given the short runway, legislators will move quickly to advance their priorities; waiting to meet with them until January will even more severely limit your ability to impact their decisions.

Please remember: advocacy does not have to be hard or time-consuming—or intimidating. But you do have to commit to it. And remember, WASA stands ready to assist you in your advocacy efforts. In addition to our traditional in-session activities (including the Session Guide, our weekly legislative newsletter—*This Week in Olympia*—the weekly legislative podcast, and the annual Legislative Conference), WASA will be presenting an advocacy “Lunch & Learn” webinar focused on WASA's legislative priorities. The webinar, “[Finding Your Voice: Unpacking WASA's 2024 Legislative Platform](#),” will provide you with a complete review of WASA's recently adopted Platform, including background and details about the issues and strategies to move the positions forward. This information will better arm you with the necessary information to effectively advocate for the positions of our collective members.

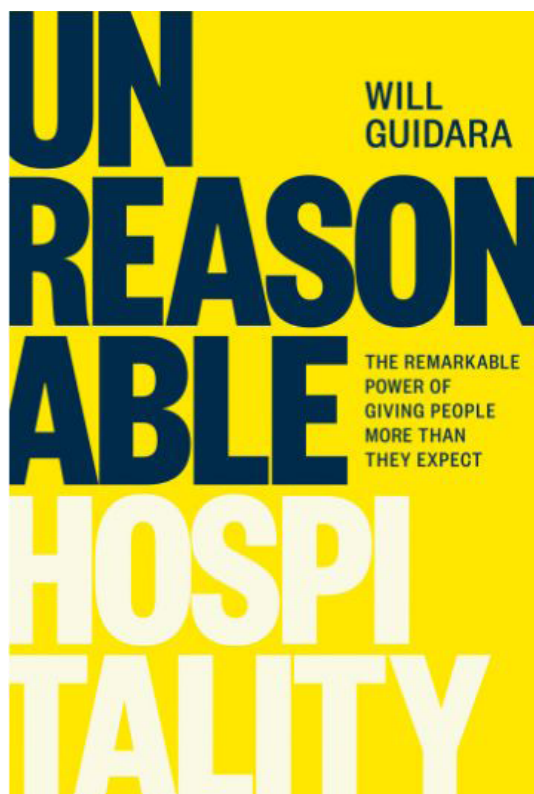
The complimentary webinar will be held on Thursday, September 21, from 12–1:00 p.m. All administrators are welcome; whether you are an advocacy expert or a novice, you are encouraged to participate. Registration for the webinar is available [here](#).



*Dan Steele is WASA Assistant Executive Director of Government Relations.*

# WASA BOOK CORNER

*Unreasonable Hospitality: The Remarkable Power of Giving People More Than They Expect* by Will Guidara



*Unreasonable Hospitality*  
by Will Guidara

**Watch if you have time...it's 13 minutes.** That was what the subject line said when Mike Nelson sent me an email. Mike was referring to a Ted Talk by *Unreasonable Hospitality* author Will Guidara. I found so much value in the Ted Talk I watched it twice in a row. A few months later, after presenting a full-day workshop at the WASA Summer Conference, Mike gave me the book *Unreasonable Hospitality*.

The reason leaders can connect with the content of the book is that Guidara, who owned Eleven Madison Park, the number-one-rated restaurant in the world at one time, went out of his way to create an environment where patrons felt not only welcome but heard, and others found that to be unreasonable.

Reading this book will inspire leaders to answer the following questions:

- How do we create an environment where students, staff and parents do not just feel seen, but heard as well?

- What simple acts of kindness can we offer, such as asking people about their favorite snack or drink, to help create a more engaging space for our staff during meetings?
- How might some of these actions help us retain or attract the best teachers and leaders?
- Even if we feel we are the best at what we do, how can we be a bit more intentional in our actions in the classroom, building, or district?

Perhaps we all should try to be a bit more unreasonable.



*Dr. Peter DeWitt is an author and facilitator with the WASA Instructional Leadership Academy. Dr. DeWitt writes a [regular column](#) for Education Week.*

## Have you seen the latest WASA News?

*WASA News* is published monthly, providing our members with the newest information and resources for school administrators, central office leaders, principals, and superintendents. Learn more about the organization, along with helpful links and trainings that could benefit you and your district! Read this month's *WASA News* to learn more about:

- State Auditor Assistance
- Andy Wolf To Retire
- Government-to-Government Relationships Training
- WASA and ERNN Expand Partnership
- DOH Guide to Air Quality
- FAFSA/WAFSA Changes

Interested in receiving WASA's monthly newsletter delivered directly to your inbox? Email [itroiani@wasa-oly.org](mailto:itroiani@wasa-oly.org) to join our mailing list!





# New WASA Members

We've welcomed 110 new members since June 2023.

Our newest class of WASA members joins over 1,600 members from across Washington. Collectively, they represent diverse districts from every corner of the state.

**Tamikya Gore**, Auburn  
**Stephanie Johanson**, Auburn  
**Dee Nelons**, Auburn  
**Barbara Piguet**, Auburn  
**Jon Young**, Auburn  
**Maria Kuffel**, Bainbridge Island  
**Annalisa Sanchez**, Bainbridge Island  
**Jennifer Goodwin**, Battle Ground  
**Lizeth Godsey**, Bethel  
**Luke Luttrell**, Bridgeport  
**Jesse Macy**, Bridgeport  
**Michelle Nilsen**, Burlington-Edison  
**Lucy Dafoe**, Cape Flattery  
**Anthony Jones**, Cape Flattery  
**Michelle Paulson**, Central Kitsap  
**Rustin Willson**, Central Kitsap  
**Gina Bullis**, Central Valley  
**Jeffrey Broome**, Centralia  
**Heather Taitch**, Cheney  
**Jenifer Leavens**, Chief Leschi  
**Anya Gumke**, Deer Park  
**Kim Browning**, Eastmont  
**Kristin Lierheimer**, Edmonds  
**Kathleen Gallagher**, Elma  
**Kerri Blankenship**, ESD 113  
**Viet-Anh Moy**, ESD 114  
**Toni Cheever**, Federal Way  
**Celina Rodriguez**, Ferndale  
**Kara Silsbee**, Ferndale  
**Bryan Long**, Finley  
**Rodriguez Broadnax**, Grand Coulee Dam  
**Telisa Reed**, Griffin  
**Andrew Benitez**, Highline  
**Jackie Bryan**, Highline  
**Sarah Chandler**, Highline  
**Teshon Christie**, Highline  
**Kathleen Luksan**, Highline

**Sean Morrow**, Highline  
**Gilbert Parsons**, Highline  
**Laura Schneider**, Highline  
**Sarah Talbot**, Highline  
**Allan Bredyr**, Index  
**Jennifer McCallum**, Kalama  
**Kelley Rutherford**, Kennewick  
**Lauri Landerholm**, La Center  
**Michelle O'Neil**, La Center  
**Craig Mott**, Lake Washington  
**Erin Murphy**, Lakewood  
**James Peckham**, Lakewood  
**Lissan Wipfli**, Lakewood  
**Hannah Bolivar**, Mercer Island  
**Elyse Darwood**, Methow Valley  
**Michael Wilbur**, Methow Valley  
**Josh Brooks**, Morton  
**Triscia Hochstatter**, Moses Lake  
**Roberta Mason**, Moses Lake  
**Jeremy O'Neil**, Moses Lake  
**Mark Chandler**, Mossyrock  
**Lynette Brower**, Mount Vernon  
**James Shank**, North Beach  
**Cristopher Turner**, North Mason  
**Rick Winters, Jr.**, North River  
**Tammy Alonzo**, North Thurston  
**Haley Ortega**, North Thurston  
**Derrick Pete**, North Thurston  
**Amber Slosson**, North Thurston  
**Laura Conklin**, Olympia  
**William Harris**, Olympia  
**Paula Perryman**, Olympia  
**Heather Randolph**, Olympia  
**Robert Smart**, Pasco  
**Jacob Stueckle**, Pasco  
**Shelby MacMeekin**, Port Townsend  
**Niki Swanson**, Prosser



**Gordon Brobbey**, Puyallup  
**Joseph Byrne**, Puyallup  
**Teri Harris**, Puyallup  
**Candice McGregor**, Puyallup  
**Robin Osborn**, Puyallup  
**Eva Pelliconi**, Puyallup  
**Christopher Sieg**, Puyallup  
**David Slagle**, Puyallup  
**Cecilia Tamayo**, Puyallup  
**Gus Wessel**, Puyallup  
**Ron Moag**, Quilcene  
**Sarah Decker**, Quileute  
**Tory Christensen**, Richland  
**Katie Pardini**, Richland  
**Heather Schaef**, Richland  
**Michelle Sorensen**, Richland  
**Angela Withers**, Richland  
**Donna Reier**, Riverview  
**Brett Greenwood**, Sedro-Wooley  
**Brian Isakson**, Sedro-Wooley  
**Kathleen Meath**, Sumner-Bonney Lake  
**Brennan Bailey**, Toledo  
**Kevin Bogatin**, Tumwater  
**Amy Queen**, University Place  
**Shannon Graham**, WA State Center for  
 Childhood Deafness & Hearing Loss  
**Penny Brown**, Waterville  
**Rainy Anderson**, Wellpinit  
**Shayne Rennie**, Wenatchee  
**Jolynn Wertz**, Wenatchee  
**Rich Polkinghorn**, White Salmon Valley  
**Richard Rasanen**, Wishkah Valley  
**Chris Schumaker**, Wishram  
**Brianne Knighton**, Yelm  
**Christopher Woods**, Yelm

## A MESSAGE FROM JOEY CASTILLEJA WASA Membership

**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 are a part of a network of leaders focused on equity, leadership, and advocacy for the schools that ultimately serve our students.

WASA is like having a full-time back-up office that truly cares about the success of your school systems. I sincerely believe in WASA and those who make up its membership! We look forward to welcoming you to this great network of leaders.

[Learn more information about our membership.](#)



*Dr. Joey Castilleja is superintendent of the Mabton School District, and is the 2023-24 WASA Membership Committee Chair.*

# Incoming Superintendents

Kelly Aramaki, Bellevue  
 Neil Varble, Boistfort  
 James Crawford, Bremerton  
 Chris Pearson, Burlington-Edison  
 Lester Herndon, ESD 113  
 Carrie Crickmore, Concrete  
 Anna Tracey, Cosmopolis  
 Wyatt Ladiges, Curlew  
 Tim Lawless, Damman  
 Alexa Allman, Deer Park  
 Jay Brower, Eatonville  
 Troy Tornow, Ellensburg  
 Tricia Jeffries, Endicott  
 Bryan Long, Finley  
 Rodriguez Broadnax, Grand Coulee Dam  
 Rob Darling, Grandview  
 Kelly Shea, Great Northern  
 Telisa Reed, Griffin  
 Howard King, Harrington  
 Lance Gibbon, Hood Canal  
 Brian Freeman, Inchelium  
 Alan Bredy, Index  
 Andie Webb, Kahlotus  
 Jennifer McCallum, Kalama

Erin Murphy, Lakewood  
 Tabatha Mires, Manson  
 Travis Hanson, Mead  
 Kimberly Headrick, Medical Lake  
 Shawn Woodward, Monroe  
 Mark Chandler, Mossyrock  
 Eric Maynard, Muchleshoot  
 James Shank, North Beach  
 Rick Winters, North River  
 Michael Tolley, Northshore  
 Steve Fisk, Odessa  
 Brenda Padgett, Onalaska  
 Stephanie Andler, Palisades  
 Scotti Wiltse, Pateros  
 Kimberly Casey, Prosser  
 Ron Moag, Quilcene  
 Sheri Crippen, Quileute  
 Dan Schlotfeldt, Snoqualmie  
 Aaron Chavez, Soap Lake  
 Marc Jacobson, St. John  
 Lance Hahn, Star  
 Mark Pickel, Starbuck  
 Jon Claymore, Taholah  
 Mike Jones, Tekoa



Brennan Bailey, Toledo  
 Shwan Myers, Toppenish  
 Scott Fenter, Toutle Lake  
 Concepcion Pedroza, Tukwila  
 Kevin Bogatin, Tumwater  
 David Woods, Waitsburg  
 Penny Brown, Waterville  
 Kory Kalahar, Wenatchee  
 Rich Polkinghorn, White Salmon Valley  
 Richard Rasanen, Wishkah  
 Chris Schumaker, Wishram  
 Christopher Woods, Yelm

## BLAST FROM THE PAST Hotline Twenty Years Ago

### WASA HOTLINE

A Publication of the Washington Association of School Administrators

June 2004

#### IN THIS ISSUE

- School System Improvement Resource Guide (SSIRG) – An update
- Legislative platform and budget impact surveys – Responses requested by June 7
- WASA Corporate Partners program completes its first year
- Apple School Funding Project gains momentum
- 2004 WASA Superintendents Workshop takes a proactive look at the future
- Bellevue's Mike Riley named most effective administrator in large district category
- Upcoming Region Events
- WASA New Active Membership

#### Retiring? Reached the twenty-year mark?

Be recognized for your dedicated service to public education at the 2004 WASA Awards Luncheon and in WASA's Annual Report. Send an e-mail with your milestone information to Marilee Jensen at [mjensen@wasa-oly.org](mailto:mjensen@wasa-oly.org).

#### From the President

Rich Waldo Emerson described success as "the respect of intelligent people and the affection of children." In my day-to-day life in my own schools, I have been blessed with the affection of many youngsters. As your WASA President, I have experienced an incredible level of support and respect from people I count as among the most gifted professionals I have ever known.

Our WASA Board of Directors is a diverse group of leaders who have supported me completely and given our Association strong direction. Our committee chairs and region presidents do much of the real work of governance in WASA, and we have had hard working and highly effective folks in those key positions. My partners on the executive committee, Mack Armstrong and Paul Rosier, have gone the extra mile in both advising me and being available to do important work over the year for our Association. My year as president of WASA has given me an even greater appreciation of our exceptional executive director, Jill

Jacoby, and our wonderful executive and support staff.

Our greatest strength in WASA is our membership. Our roster of leaders includes some of the finest public school administrators in America. Our people are active, have high expectations of their association leaders and are viewed as the strongest group voice on behalf of children in the state of Washington.

I am even more humbled about being chosen as your leader after a year of service than I was when I started. I am convinced that WASA is the pivotal professional association in the effort to achieve a high quality education for every child in our state.

Thanks to all of you for the great privilege you have given me to serve as your president. I look forward to joining all of you in support of our 2004-05 president, Paul Rosier.

Rich McCullough



Rich McCullough  
 Snoqualmie Valley SD

Check out the June 2004 issue of Hotline, which included:

- President's message from Snoqualmie Valley Superintendent Rich McCullough.
- WASA's support of Initiative 884: The Education Initiative. The measure, which would have established a one percent Sales Tax Increase for an Education Trust Fund, was ultimately rejected by the voters.
- Washington Elementary, Auburn SD, was recognized by the U.S. Department of Education for its accomplishments in "closing the achievement gap" for minority and special needs students and English Language Learners (ELL) students.
- OSPI/WASA Special Education Workshop—Redesigning Leadership: A Kaleidoscope of Possibilities.
- WASA's new Corporate Partners Program.

You can view this historical artifact and others on our [website](http://www.wasa-oly.org). Throughout the year, we will continue to highlight and compare current issues and topics with those of the past.



WASA Hotline • June 2004

WASA Hotline from  
 June 2004.

## SEPTEMBER REMINDERS

### Connect with Us

Be sure to follow us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/wasaoly), [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/wasaoly), and [Twitter](https://twitter.com/wasaoly) 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 at [schard@wasa-oly.org](mailto:schard@wasa-oly.org) if you have questions or need assistance.



# AASA CORNER



## Back to School: Safety and Wellness

From student well-being to emergency preparedness, implementing and maintaining effective safety measures continues to be a top priority for district leaders. Resources include:

- [Ways Schools Can Help Prevent Bullying](#)
- [Support for Grieving Students](#)
- ["Behavioral Threat Assessment and Intervention in Schools"](#)
- [AASA School Safety and Crisis Planning Toolkit](#)



## Save the Date for the 2024 National Conference on Education

Registration for the 2024 National Conference on Education opened in July. The conference will be held February 15-17 in San Diego, CA. Visit the [AASA website](#) to view the conference schedule. Register early for the best deal and to access reserved lodging.

## AASA Journal of Scholarship & Practice

### Educational Administration Scholarships

AASA's Educational Administration Scholarships were created in 1949 to provide incentive, honor, and financial assistance to outstanding graduate students in school administration who intend to make the school superintendency a career. Seven top graduate students in educational administration will receive a scholarship from AASA. The scholarships are given in honor of AASA's former executive directors. Further information can be found on the AASA Website. To view the information, click [here](#).

## THANK YOU, DIAMOND SPONSORS!

Corporate sponsorship has always been an essential element of WSA'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, 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 at [awolf@wasa-oly.org](mailto:awolf@wasa-oly.org).

# AASA Governing Board Representatives at Work

**AASA members in Washington state are represented by Krestin Bahr, Michelle Price, Ron Banner, and Wade Smith.** Your AASA Governing Board representatives are elected to three-year terms and speak for you as members of the Governing Board exerting their voice in AASA decision making.

In July, your AASA liaisons attended the AASA Legislative Advocacy Conference in Washington D.C., joining over 100 superintendent delegates from across the nation. Over the course of the three-day event, they heard from education policy experts, engaged with key U.S. Department of Education staff, and finalized the AASA beliefs and legislative positions for the upcoming year.

In addition to opportunities to engage with federal representatives, the conference sessions were timely and valuable, focusing on relevant topics and issues school districts are currently facing. Following were some of the topics reviewed:

- **Educational funding** – specifically around the federal government's responsibility to fully fund their special education obligation and the significant disparities in IDEA allocations per state.
- **Artificial intelligence and data security** – experts provided keen insight as districts wrestle with artificial intelligence and cybersecurity. Of note, is that 200 million dollars of additional funding is expected to help launch a three-year pilot program to safeguard our nation's school and library cybersecurity efforts.
- **Congressional makeup** – senior policy advisors provided a review of the current political landscape on The Hill and how polarization and partisanship may prove challenging when it comes to educational funding in FY 24.
- **Legal updates** – the latest from the Supreme Court, OCR, DOJ, and the Biden Administration were discussed as it relates to current issues around topics such as Title IX, gender identity, and pending court cases.
- **Teacher apprenticeship programs shortages** – a review of how different districts and states are leveraging apprenticeship programs and other methods to help address workforce shortages.



*From top left to right: Krestin Bahr, Michelle Price, Ron Banner, and Wade Smith.*

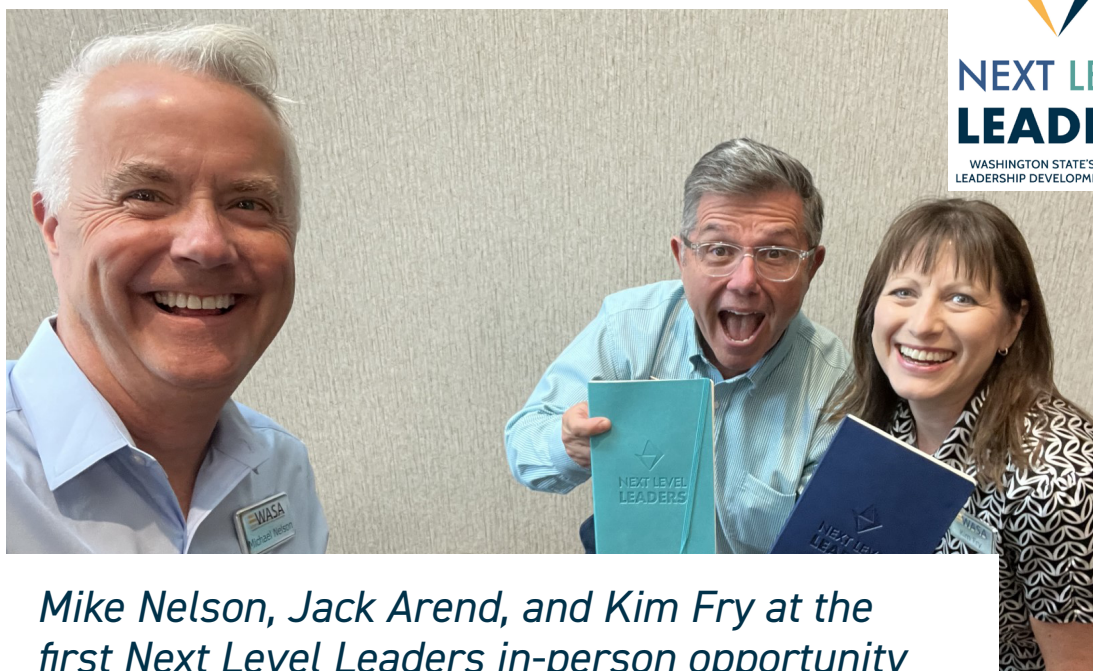
During the conference, Gladys Cruz was also officially sworn in as this year's AASA President, in addition to new AASA executive and board members from across the nation.





# INGER OWEN REFLECTS ON WASHINGTON STATE'S PREMIERE LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT ACADEMY

## Next Level Leaders



*Mike Nelson, Jack Arend, and Kim Fry at the first Next Level Leaders in-person opportunity*



*Dr. Jenni Donohoo and Dr. Peter DeWitt*

**My hope in joining Next Level Leaders (NLL) is to engage in a professional learning community, with my immediate focus being leading through challenges the Olympia School District (OSD) is facing post-pandemic.**

In attending the Kick-Off in Yakima, I was surprised by the intentional focus on hospitality and the impact it had on me. One administrator described it as serendipity—as if everything were falling into place just for them. I attribute the sense of serendipity to the care that often goes unseen or lies beneath the surface of a memorable and impactful event.

*Right off the bat, organizers designed ways to help people connect and build relationships. This set the stage for collaborative learning experiences.*

From the initial greeting at the front door to being handed my favorite drink (cold brew coffee), it was clear great care was taken in creating a welcoming environment. Providing the drink of choice was not only fun, but it also provided a conversation piece to break the ice. Right off the bat, organizers designed ways to help people connect and build relationships. This set the stage for collaborative learning experiences.

During the day and a half spent together, Dr. Peter DeWitt and Dr. Jenni Donohoo led us through instructional protocols I could apply to issues within my scope of work, particularly disproportionality related to exclusionary discipline. The protocols challenged me to work with colleagues and facilitators to dig deeper, leading to a different challenge emerging as the true problem of practice.

What I had thought was the problem of practice may be the resulting impact on students. What if we improve the teacher's belief that all students can achieve at high levels? Will students feel a greater sense of belonging? Would the exclusionary discipline rates be a data point indicating a positive systemic impact? Through collaborative discussion, I was able to outline a draft action plan to take back to OSD's Instructional Leadership Team for review and refinement. In the end, we used these new tools to redesign our August professional learning days for administrators and teachers.

Over the course of the upcoming school year, our district will continue to articulate that regardless of one's position within our organization, the key to next-level learning is quality planning, instruction, listening, and reflection. I hope you will consider being a part of this movement to innovate and lead within our post-pandemic school system by joining Next Level Leaders, Washington State's Premiere Leadership Academy.



*Inger Owen is Executive Director of Teaching & Learning, Olympia School District.*

## Join Next Level Leaders!

Created in conjunction with WASA and AWSP, Next Level Leaders is focused on higher student achievement for every child.

The Academy Believes:

- Transformative leaders can build collaborative learning systems that promote powerful teaching and learning practices.
- Improved student achievement for all students will be the result of systems that keep learning for every student as their central work.

Find out more on our [Next Level Leaders fact sheet](#).

**Interested in registering for 2023-25?**  
Email [Ashley Barker](#), Next Level Leaders Project Lead.



## ASHA RILEY REFLECTS

# The Impact of WASA's Instructional Leadership Network



**As I reflect on my experience with the Instructional Leadership Network (ILN), I would like to first express my deepest gratitude to Mike Nelson, Chris Beals, and Joel Aune for bringing it to us.** They recognized the critical state of instructional leadership post-pandemic and assembled a team to respond.

After the pandemic, as we moved closer to normalcy, I found myself a bit stuck, like I was in a leadership vapor lock. I wanted to break free and move forward, but I still felt the overwhelming force of what we had just experienced. The pandemic brought us challenges, division, and loss. After a long season of merely making the best of the worst circumstances, we emerged on the other side. This is where my journey with the ILN began.

At our first session, Chris Beals shared the vision and the purpose of the network. As I listened and looked around the room, I felt

hope emerge. Colleagues like Mike Nelson and Joel Aune brought experts like Jenni Donohoo and Peter Dewitt into the room, and they were all eager to dive deep and bring us back from the defeats we faced during the pandemic. They all wanted to help us break free from the post-pandemic vapor lock we had been stuck in. They were there championing us and the important work of instructional leadership.

*Over the course of two years, I sat in sessions with world leaders in education like John Hattie, and it was some of the best professional development I've ever been involved in.*

Over the course of two years, I sat in sessions with world leaders in education like John Hattie, and it was some of the best professional development I've ever been involved in. Jenni Donohoo, always mindful of our learning

context, sought to understand our current needs and consistently left us with practical action steps. She didn't just deepen my understanding, she shared meaningful ways to move the work of improving student learning forward. Peter DeWitt consistently challenged our thinking and pushed us to reflect on our current professional development practices. He was always considering where we might stretch our thinking, grow, and push forward.

As a member of ILN, I watched as our collective efficacy was rebuilt. We had found our way back to the work that matters most, facing the challenges together and reasserting our role in improving outcomes for kids.

I am forever grateful to the team at WASA for seeing our needs and responding.



*Asha Riley is Assistant Superintendent of the Woodland Public Schools.*

## Presenters at Instructional Leadership Network In-Person Conference



*Chris Beals*







## Important Member Demographic Survey

As part of WASA's commitment to equitable practices and continuous improvement, we're gathering data on our membership and the reach of our professional learning offerings. Please assist us by responding to the quick demographic survey. The survey collects your name and responses to three multiple choice questions regarding your race/ethnicity, gender, and your current job role. Use the QR code above or access the questionnaire [here](#).

# AWSP School Leadership Workshop



**Attending AWSP's Launching School Leadership Network is an absolute must as a new or recently assigned school leader.** This program provides three workshops corresponding to the stages of a new leader's first year, each offering insights from experienced principals and educational experts.

By participating in Launching School Leadership, you'll gain invaluable knowledge about effective leadership strategies, cultivating a positive school culture, and

developing a vision that inspires faculty and students. Moreover, you'll learn about essential topics such as data analysis, communication, and the School Leader Paradigm, which are indispensable for successfully managing a school.

This program will fully equip you to face the challenges of being a school leader and make a positive impact on your students' lives. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact [Jack Arend](#) or [Dameon Brown](#).

## Celebrating WASA Past President Michelle Whitney



On August 10, Michelle Whitney was honored for her leadership and accomplishments as 2022-23 WASA President. Family, board members, and Pasco School District staff were in attendance, as well as WASA members, former WASA Presidents, and WASA staff. Thank you to reception sponsors Beresford, Piper Sandler, McKinstry, and Gaggle. And thank you, Michelle, for your stellar leadership and dedication to WASA and the 1,600 members we serve. You are a marvelous representation of WASA and the superintendency.



WASA Presidents





# 2023-24 WASA President-Elect



WASA members have elected Dr. Bob Maxwell, Superintendent, Pullman School District, as WASA's 2023-24 President-elect. Dr. Bob Maxwell will assume the presidency on July 1, 2024, following the term of WASA President Dr. Mike Villarreal.

As WASA's President-elect, Maxwell's goals are to:

- Continue developing educational policies and systems that promote personal growth, equity, inclusion, and belonging for all by removing barriers and capitalizing on WASA members' ideas, innovation, and student voices to obtain the highest level of staff and student achievement.
- Broaden opportunities for Washington State's Administrators by building strong relationships, trust, and supports across the state.
- To promote WASA's voice and influence with legislators and other policymakers so that students' voice is included to ensure the provision of ample resources for all school districts.

Maxwell received his superintendent credentials and a doctorate in education from Washington State University and holds a master's in school administration from Azusa Pacific University and a bachelor's degree in science.

Maxwell began working in the Snowline Joint Unified School District in 1991, teaching elementary and middle-level science. Maxwell became an assistant principal, principal and executive director of special services at Bethel School District before becoming the assistant superintendent and then the Pullman School District superintendent in 2016. [Read the detailed press release here.](#)

## Washington State Superintendent of the Year (SOY)

The 2024 Washington Superintendent of the Year process is underway. The online application is available on the [AASA website](#).

Each year, educational organizations across the United States recognize outstanding superintendents who have made significant contributions to their respective states. To be considered for Washington's SOY process, the application deadline is **October 1, 2023**. WASA will convene a diverse panel of judges to review and score the applications submitted and determine Washington's next Superintendent of the Year for 2024.

The selected candidate for Washington State will be submitted to AASA to be considered for the 2024 AASA National Superintendent of the Year. AASA will announce the 2024 National Superintendent of the Year at the 2024 AASA National Conference on Education, February 15-17, 2024, in San Diego, California. For questions on Washington's SOY process, contact [Shawna Kiliz](#) or by phone at 360.459.3641.

## Upcoming Opportunities!



**Why Leadership Coaching? Lunch & Learn**  
September 20 | 12-1 p.m.



**Finding Your Voice Lunch & Learn**  
September 21 | 12-1 p.m.



**WASA Fall Conference**  
October 1-2 | Tacoma Marriott



**Women in Leadership Virtual Event**  
October 10 | 9:30-11 a.m.



# Staff Spotlight

## FEATURING KALEY VONVOLKLI



In this issue, we're proud to spotlight our Accounting Assistant, Kaley VonVolkli. Kaley joined WASA in March 2022.

*Kaley's hard work and commitment to the WASA team show in all that she does. Whether she is enthusiastically taking on a new project or helping a member, she always does it with a smile. It makes working with her great every day!*

—Eve Johnson,  
WASA Business and Infrastructure Manager

### What is your role at WASA?

I am the Accounting Assistant and support Eve Johnson in all of WASA's Business and Finance needs. I also temporarily filled the role of Interim Executive Assistant from April to June of 2023.

### What does your job entail?

My job mostly consists of Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, payroll, and membership.

### What do you like most about your job?

I've always liked numbers and finances, but in this specific role, it's been very inspiring to be a part of an organization that makes such a difference in the lives of those we serve.

### How has WASA changed since you were hired?

There has been a lot of growing of our team. It's great to see new people get involved from all walks of life and to see their dedication to the public education system.

### What is your favorite memory at WASA?

My favorite memory has to be the 2023 Summer Conference! I loved being able to not only connect with WASA staff in person, but also with the people I've been virtually contacting for over a year. It truly is incredible to see so many dedicated people from all over the state come together to celebrate their successes.

### What were you doing before being hired at WASA?

I was an Accounting Specialist for the oldest credit union in the state.

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

I love to read! My favorite genre is science fiction or fantasy, and my all-time favorite book series is the Cradle Series by Will Wight. If I'm not reading, you can find me spending time with my family and/or pets (two cats and a puppy!) or spending time outdoors!

### Best vacation you've been to?

I haven't been on many vacations, but in April of 2022, I made a trip to Phoenix, Arizona to graduate with my bachelor's degree from Grand Canyon University. My boyfriend and I celebrated our anniversary while we were there with a two-hour horseback ride through the desert to a destination steak house!

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

Wherever my family is.

### Reflect a bit on your mentors, Lisa and Eve.

In my time at WASA, I have been blessed to get to work closely with, and get to know, two wonderful ladies who are irreplaceable: Eve Johnson and Lisa Gehman.

Eve is one of the best mentors I've had in my career. She is a wealth of knowledge and knows everything about WASA. I so appreciate that she tells things how they are, is always honest, and is always willing to help me when I need it, no matter how busy she is or how inconvenient multiple back-to-back calls can be.

Lisa is such a joy to work with, and I am truly inspired by her dedication to our members and our team. She is truly a one-of-a-kind person, and I feel very lucky that I know her. Every time she calls, it puts a smile on my face, no matter what else is going on!

## CONTACT US

GENERAL INFORMATION  
360.943.5717

### EXECUTIVE OFFICE

360.489.3641

Joel Aune, Executive Director | [jaune@wasa-oly.org](mailto:jaune@wasa-oly.org)

Shawna Kiliz, Executive Assistant | [skiliz@wasa-oly.org](mailto:skiliz@wasa-oly.org)

Bella Troiani, Communications/Production |

[itroiani@wasa-oly.org](mailto:itroiani@wasa-oly.org)

### GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

360.489.3642

Dan Steele, Assistant Executive Director |

[dsteeler@wasa-oly.org](mailto:dsteeler@wasa-oly.org)

Sheila Chard, Administrative Assistant | [schard@wasa-oly.org](mailto:schard@wasa-oly.org)

### PROFESSIONAL LEARNING & MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

360.489.3640

Kim Fry, Assistant Executive Director | [kfry@wasa-oly.org](mailto:kfry@wasa-oly.org)

Mike Nelson, Assistant Executive Director |

[mnelson@wasa-oly.org](mailto:mnelson@wasa-oly.org)

Ryan Hickerson, Professional Learning/Membership Assistant |

[rhickerson@wasa-oly.org](mailto:rhickerson@wasa-oly.org)

### ACCOUNTING

360.489.3643

Eve Johnson, Business/Infrastructure Manager |

[ejohnson@wasa-oly.org](mailto:ejohnson@wasa-oly.org)

Kaley VonVolkli, Accounting Assistant | [kvonvolkli@wasa-oly.org](mailto:kvonvolkli@wasa-oly.org)

### MEMBER SUPPORT & ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATIONS

360.489.3646

Andy Wolf, Assistant Executive Director | [awolf@wasa-oly.org](mailto:awolf@wasa-oly.org)

Natalie Plott, Office Assistant | [nplott@wasa-oly.org](mailto:nplott@wasa-oly.org)

## WASA OFFICERS

### PRESIDENT

Mike Villarreal, Hoquiam

### PRESIDENT-ELECT

Bob Maxwell, Pullman

### PAST PRESIDENT

Michelle Whitney, Pasco

### SECRETARY

Chrys Sweeting, Arlington

### TREASURER

Linda McKay, NCESD 171



## September

### SEPTEMBER 13

Aspiring Superintendents Academy  
Session #1 | Virtual  
8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

### SEPTEMBER 16

Inclusionary Practices Project  
Virtual Half Day Kick-off  
8 a.m. – 12 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER 18

Inclusionary Practices Project  
District Facilitator Action Planning #1  
9 – 10:30 a.m.

### SEPTEMBER 18

Mentor Academy  
Virtual Meeting #1  
8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

### SEPTEMBER 18

Next Level Leaders  
Virtual Meeting #1  
1 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER 20

Lunch & Learn: Why Leadership Coaching?  
With BTS Spark  
Virtual  
12 – 1 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER 21

Lunch & Learn: Finding Your Voice: Unpacking  
WASA's 2024 Legislative Platform  
With Dan Steele  
Virtual  
12 – 1 p.m.

### SEPTEMBER 27

Inclusionary Practices Project  
Professional Development Providers Series #1  
1 – 2:30 p.m.

## October

### OCTOBER 1-2

Fall Conference 2023  
Tacoma Marriott  
Tacoma, WA

### OCTOBER 3

Instructional Leadership Academy  
Statewide In-Person Fall Conference  
Puget Sound Educational Service District

### OCTOBER 10

Inclusionary Practices Project  
Professional Learning Seminar #1  
8:30 – 10 a.m.

### OCTOBER 10-11

Balanced Calendar Summit  
Yakima Convention Center

### OCTOBER 13

Next Level Leaders  
Virtual Meeting #2  
10 a.m.

### OCTOBER 18

Aspiring Superintendent Academy  
Session #2 | Virtual  
8:30 – 11:30 a.m.

### OCTOBER 19

Instructional Leadership Academy  
Virtual Workshop #1  
8:30 – 10 a.m.

### OCTOBER 23

Mentor Academy  
Virtual Meeting #2  
8:30 – 10:30 a.m.

### OCTOBER 23

Inclusionary Practices Project  
District Facilitator Action Planning #2  
9 – 10:30 a.m.

### OCTOBER 26

Inclusionary Practices Project  
Team Accountability Workshopping Session #1  
8:30 – 11:40 a.m.

### OCTOBER 26

Aspiring Central Office Leadership Academy  
Session #2 | Virtual  
9 – 11 a.m.

### OCTOBER 27-28

2nd Annual WALAS Conference  
UW Tacoma | Tacoma, WA  
9:30 – 11 a.m.

## November

### NOVEMBER 1

Inclusionary Practices Project  
Professional Development Providers Series #2  
1 – 2:30 p.m.

### NOVEMBER 7

Inclusionary Practices Project  
Professional Learning Seminar #2  
8:30 – 10 a.m.

### NOVEMBER 13

ERNN Online Event

### NOVEMBER 15

Aspiring Central Office Leadership Academy  
Session #3 | Virtual  
9 – 11 a.m.

### NOVEMBER 20

Inclusionary Practices Project  
District Facilitator Action Planning #3  
9 – 10:30 a.m.

### NOVEMBER 29

Inclusionary Practices Project  
Professional Development Providers Series #3  
1 – 2:30 p.m.

# Professional Learning Opportunities

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

