

## WASA News

January 2022



*The WASA News is a monthly publication that provides key information to you in a concise, quick-read format. For those who want a bit more detail, links to additional information are embedded in the text of this publication. We hope you find WASA News to be an efficient way to keep abreast of new information, emerging issues, and timely resources. Be reminded that previous issues of the WASA News can be found on our [website](#).*

*"Each man's life touches so many other lives. When he isn't around, he leaves an awful hole, doesn't he?"*

*—Clarence Odbody  
Angel Second Class  
It's a Wonderful Life*

Happy New Year!

I hope the holiday season was a blessed one for you and your family. I suspect for many of you, the time away from work was needed and appreciated more than ever. The constant intensity of your work, the ongoing emergence of never-seen-before challenges, and the continued uncertainty of what the future will bring may be eroding your own sense of hope and assurance.

Does your work matter? Are you making a difference? Is it really worth all the sacrifice, stress, and frustration? As a school district leader, are you still achieving your WHY?

Last month marked 75 years since the debut of Frank Capra's *It's a Wonderful Life*, my all-time favorite holiday movie. It's become a tradition for me, as I've watched it around Christmas time for nearly 30 years. Fans of this movie associate it with a variety of life lessons, including the resilience of the human spirit to rise triumphantly out of the darkest times; the direct and indirect impacts of putting others before self; serving the community for a greater good; friendship; loyalty; and one's legacy—intended or otherwise.

This year, two hours after settling in with a glass of wine for *It's a Wonderful Life* (commercial-free telecast ☺), a big idea was reinforced for me: the considerable impact we have on the lives of others simply by doing what we do. But more than impact, the film reminded me that most of us are either unaware of, or inclined to downplay the difference we, as leaders, are making in the lives of others. George Bailey was not a leader in a formal capacity, as you are. But there is no doubt he was a leader, making a positive and life-changing difference for family, friends, and many in his community.

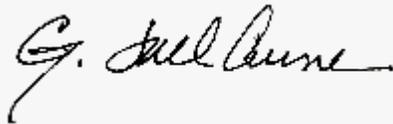
Those of you who have seen the film know that due to a series of unfortunate circumstances, George finds himself in a terrible state of emotional despair and bitterness. He is then given a gift—to see his community and a world in which

he was never born. This vision opened George's eyes to the truly remarkable influence he'd had on the people he had touched during his lifetime in Bedford Falls.

As school district leaders, you are all George Baileys. You are sometimes stressed and exhausted by the demands and responsibilities of your work. You may not fully appreciate what you have or what you have managed to accomplish despite the obstacles before you. Finding yourselves managing and leading in these extraordinarily challenging times, with no end yet in sight, may be testing your resolve. You might be asking, does my work matter? Am I making a difference? As a school district leader, am I still achieving my WHY?

George Bailey's story provides the answer to these questions. Your impact is far-reaching and life-changing more than you will ever know—unless of course, a celestial intervention provides for you the view of a parallel universe where you were never born. In the absence of such an opportunity, take my word for it. Clarence Odbody was right. Your leadership does matter, and you are making a difference—a big and lasting difference—in the lives of family, friends, staff, students, the good people of your community, and our world.

All the best in 2022,



G. Joel Aune  
Executive Director

## NOMINATIONS OPEN FOR 2022–23 WASA PRESIDENT-ELECT

WASA Past President **Brian Talbott** is seeking nominees for the 2022–23 President-elect election. Nominees must presently serve on the west side of Washington. Nominations can be made by regions, components, individuals, or self-nomination. The deadline to submit a nomination is **January 10, 2022**. Contact **Brian Talbott**, Superintendent, East Valley SD, by **email** or phone at 509.241.5032 if you have questions, wish to self-nominate, or wish to nominate a candidate.



**SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL TO PRESENT AT  
THE WASA/AWSP 2022 SUMMER CONFERENCE!**

This year is the 40th WASA/AWSP Summer Conference, taking place **June 26–28** in Spokane. The theme will be "You Belong Here," with sessions focusing on inclusion, belonging, climate & culture, and more. Submissions are open for Conference proposals [here](#). The deadline is **January 14**.



## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

On Monday, January 10, the Legislature convenes its second year of the 67th Biennial Session. The Legislature adopts two-year budgets in odd-numbered sessions, while legislators in second-year sessions typically have a heavy focus on policy issues, and only make necessary, usually minor, adjustments to the budgets. During the upcoming “short” session, limited to 60 days, legislators will delve into a multitude of policy bills; however, it is expected there will be more intensive budget conversations than is normal in a supplemental session.

**Why?** In June 2020, prior to the budget-writing 2021 Session, there was a projected \$8.8 billion revenue shortfall, due to economic impacts of the COVID pandemic. By September, however, revenue rebounded and by the March 2021 revenue forecast—which the Legislature used as a basis to adopt the two-year Operating Budget—state revenues had returned to the level expected in February 2020. Revenue forecasts this past June, September, and November continued to escalate, leaving the state with \$7.3 billion above expectations when last year’s two-year budget was adopted. On top of this projected “surplus,” mandatory caseload costs are expected to be significantly below expectations, “saving” upwards of \$1 billion. When you couple significant unexpected revenue with a major reduction in entitlement costs, you have a formula that will likely drive additional spending in the budget.

The first budget salvo was launched by Governor Inslee in mid-December. His 2022 Supplemental Operating Budget request includes Policy Level increases of almost \$4.2 billion. With savings in his Maintenance Level proposal, his total request is \$3.04 billion. As a comparison, Inslee’s 2020 Supplemental Operating Budget request was just over \$834 million (\$478 million in caseload costs and \$336 million in policy requests). The Legislature will craft their own budget, which will likely be much different than the governor’s; however, budget-writers will have difficulty telling their colleagues “No,” when revenues are at record levels. For information on Governor Inslee’s budget, see [WASA’s TWIO](#).

Given the ongoing challenges in our public schools, it is incumbent on all school administrators to be fully engaged with your local legislators. If legislators expand the budget, as expected, their focus will be on numerous issues other than K-12 education—unless they hear from you. Often. And with or without budget increases, there will be a host of K-12 policy bills—both positive and negative—that need to be addressed. Legislators need to hear “your story” and understand your needs. If you do not advocate for your students, your staff, and your district, who will? To support your advocacy efforts, WASA will continue to provide resources and assistance, including our [2022 Legislative Platform](#), and [the School Funding Coalition priorities](#). As session begins, also be sure to follow WASA’s weekly legislative newsletter ([TWIO](#)) and [podcast](#).

View the recent Legislative Lunch and Learn presentation [here](#).

## FROM SBE: MASTERY-BASED LEARNING IN WASHINGTON

The Mastery-based Learning Work Group released their latest report with recommendations to the Legislature about how mastery-based learning (or competency-based learning) can be used in Washington to support student success. Check out the [graphic summary](#) of the report with photos and examples from schools already implementing mastery-based learning. Find the full report on [SBE's website](#) as well.



## COMMUNICATION TOOLS: PEDIATRIC VACCINE

From OSPI: The Department of Health has created toolkits for healthcare providers and for schools to help them communicate about the vaccine to parents and guardians. Here are the direct links:

- [What Parents/Guardians Should Know About Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine \(PDF\)](#)
- [COVID-19 Vaccines: Pediatric Vaccine Toolkit for Providers \(PowerPoint\)](#)

## CONTACT TRACING SUPPORTS FOR SCHOOLS

The Department of Health is offering [support for case investigation and contract tracing](#) to schools, school districts, and health jurisdictions who do not have enough staff to complete this work. Sixty investigators are ready to assist.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- [WASA/AWSP Summer Conference—Celebrating 40 Years June 26–28 | Spokane](#) Registration opens [January 24 here](#).

[Click here](#) to download the most recent version of the WASA event calendar.

## RESOURCES

WASA has developed storehouses of resources related to the **pandemic** and **equity**. The following have been recently uploaded to our [website](#):

### COVID AND PANDEMIC RESOURCES

- [Studies Show More COVID-19 Cases in Areas Without School Masking Policies](#) (CDC)
- [Effectiveness of Mask Wearing to Control Community Spread of SARS-CoV-2](#) (JAMA)
- [The Science of Mask-Wearing to Control Covid](#) (CDC)

### EQUITY

- [Developing Equity Statements](#) (Hanover Research)
- [The Best of Our Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Resources](#) (Learning for Justice)

- [10 Teaching Resources for Black History Month](#) (eSchool News)
- [Resources for Teaching About Black History Month](#) (Illinois State Board of Education)

## OTHER

- [Federal and State Resources, Guidance, and Tools to Create Safer School Environments](#) (School Safety.Gov)
- [The State of Public Education in 2021](#) (A Discussion with David Berliner and Diane Ravitch)
- [School Safety and Crisis](#) From our friends at the National Association for School Psychologists, we are happy to share their set of resources designed to support schools' efforts to promote school safety and the ability of children and youth to cope with crisis events. [Check it out!](#)



## CELEBRATING WASA AT 50

[Did you know?](#)

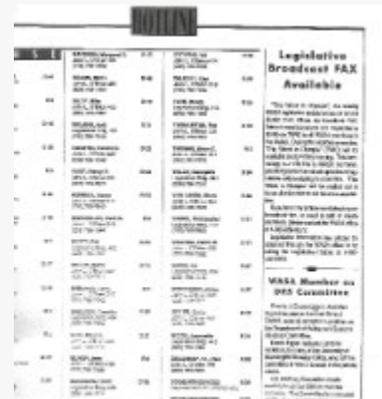
### HOTLINE NEWS

*Hotline* was established in 1971 during the legislative session to keep WASA's membership informed about the status of legislation important to schools. *Hotline* was sent to members whenever there were events to report or action to suggest.



### TWIO

In January 1992, WASA began a new publication called *This Week in Olympia* (*TWIO*) to keep members informed with up-to-date minute updates on legislative action. Members received issues of the *TWIO* by way of FAX. The *TWIO*, published weekly, remains to this day, the primary source of information and updates for WASA members leading into, during, and immediately following the legislative session each year.



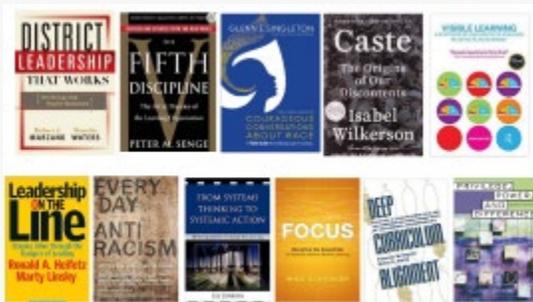
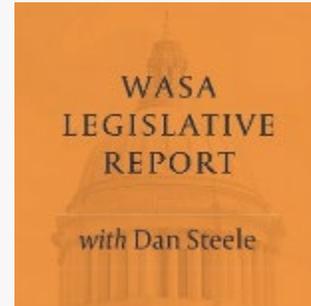
## WASA WEBSITE

The WASA website was up and running in April 1999 for WASA members to receive legislative, professional development, and governance information.



## WASA LEGISLATIVE REPORT PODCAST

Launched in 2019, Dan Steele began posting short, informative podcast episodes on a weekly basis. This podcast focuses on key legislative issues to keep WASA members informed of hot topics and emerging conversations in Olympia.



## DR. CAMPBELL'S BOOK CORNER

Dr. Tammy Campbell has been an amazing leader at several WASA events. In these learnings, Dr. Campbell has identified 11 books that have influenced her approach to education and equity. The list is available [here](#), with links to purchase.



## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT!

This month's Sponsor Spotlight features WASA's Diamond-level sponsor—**McKinstry**. We are grateful for their unwavering support of our members and programs! Click their link to learn more about them.



**McKinstry | Building a Thriving Planet**

Contact: **Melissa Pendleton**

## AASA CORNER

- **AASA Launches "Live Well, Lead Well" Campaign for District Leaders**
- **Learning and Recovery Guide: A Self Assessment Tool to Maximize the Impact of Your Federal Spending**
- Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona will be speaking at the **AASA National Conference on Education** February 17–19, 2021. Registration is **open**.



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