

MARCH 2023



NEWS

The WASA News is a monthly publication that provides key information to you in a concise, quick-read format. We hope you find WASA News to be an efficient way to keep abreast of new information, emerging issues, and timely resources. Be reminded that previous issues of the WASA News can be found on our website.



*"An investment in knowledge pays the best interest."
—Benjamin Franklin*

Friends and Colleagues,

Earlier this week, nearly 500 school board members, school district leaders, and superintendents gathered in Olympia for the 2023 Legislative Conference. Sunday's program provided attendees with information centered on two major priorities shared between WASA, WSSDA, and WASBO: Special Education and Transportation. OSPI Superintendent Reykdal shared his own vision and priorities, which are in strong alignment with those of the associations. Those present heard from students as they shared their perspectives on these two major priorities. The student voice was powerful and compelling. Keynote speaker, Shankar Vedantam presented some big ideas and strategies that conference attendees could employ as they interact with and attempt to influence legislators. On Monday, those in attendance were on the Hill pressing for our common priorities and telling the story of how these priorities impact the children and young people in classrooms across the entire state.

While this year's Legislative conference was a huge success, one day on the Hill will not get the results and outcomes we desperately need from this legislative session. This work is not a one-and-done proposition. Our day on the Hill must serve as a jump start for the important advocacy work that lies ahead.

March 1 is the first day of the final 54 days of the 2023 Legislative Session. Between now and Sine Die (April 23) WASA members need to monitor happenings in Olympia (see [TWIO](#) and/or [Dan Steele's Podcast](#)) and, most importantly, maintain regular contact with legislators. This type of work does not need to be overly time-consuming. Dan's weekly podcast is an efficient way to stay on top of key legislative issues as they emerge in Olympia. Your subsequent outreach to legislators can be a brief email or phone call—less, really is more!

Sound policy and ample resources position you to provide the supports and experiences your students need and deserve. Bad policy, coupled with insufficient resources, creates barriers that make it difficult to meet your obligation to the students under your care. This is why it is so important that you get involved in the effort to advocate for the students in your schools. Decisions made by the legislature this session will have an immediate and profound impact on your work and the students you serve.

For those of you who have been regularly engaged since the beginning of the session, keep up the good work! For those whose first engagement was Monday's Day on the Hill, I hope you will use this as a launch point for further engagement with legislators through the end of the session.

As school district leaders—superintendents and non-superintendents alike—speaking out for your students is an important part of your work. Imagine the impact of nearly 1,300 WASA members speaking with a strong and unified voice on behalf of students between now and April 23.

Let's finish strong!



Joel Aune
WASA Executive Director



UPCOMING WASA EVENTS



A CONVERSATION WITH WASA PRESIDENT, MICHELLE WHITNEY: A PEEK INTO THE LIFE OF A FEMALE SUPERINTENDENT

Complimentary | Zoom
March 15, 2023 | 12–1 p.m.



SPRING CONFERENCE FOR SMALL SCHOOL LEADERS

Wenatchee Convention Center
March 20–21, 2023



WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

Campbell's Resort, Lake Chelan
April 29, 2023



SUPERINTENDENTS CONFERENCE

Campbell's Resort, Lake Chelan
April 30–May 2, 2023

WASA PRESIDENT-ELECT CANDIDATES

Nominees for 2023–24 WASA President-elect are **Bob Maxwell, Pullman**, and **Kevin McKay, Selah**. Congratulations to both on being nominated to serve as the 2023–24 WASA President Elect. Watch for information in future issues of WASA News to learn more about the candidates. The election will be held **next August**.



Bob Maxwell

Pullman School District



Kevin McKay

Selah School District

HONORARY AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES ARE NOW OPEN

Nominations and applications are now being accepted for a number of award and scholarship opportunities. Check out these great opportunities below.

Pemco | Robert J. Handy Awards Most Effective Administrator Awards One highly effective superintendent, central office administrator, or principal will be selected from a small, medium, or large-sized district. A \$10,500 award will be equally divided among the three recipients. Deadline: March 15, 2023

Gallagher | Howard M. Coble Scholarship for Under-Represented Educational Leaders A \$5,000 scholarship will be awarded to an educator who is presently or will begin graduate studies in education by the fall of 2023. Deadline: March 29, 2023

Piper Sandler | Doyle Winter Scholarship for Administrative Leadership in Education A \$1,000 scholarship designed to assist talented and committed educational administrator who is presently or will begin a doctoral program in K-12 Public Education in 2023. Deadline: April 5, 2023

WASA Honorary Awards

REGION Awards | Deadlines vary per region

Note: Region award links are dependent on your region. Contact the Region President/**Honorary Awards Committee Chair** for deadlines in your region.

- **WASA Student Achievement Leadership Award** Recognizes innovative programs that promote access, equity, or social justice for the improvement of student achievement.
- **Award of Merit** Recipients recognized for promoting access, equity, and social justice for students, as well as making a significant contribution to WASA.
- **Community Leadership Award** Recognizes a non-WASA member for outstanding contributions to education.
- **WASA Student Leadership Award** Recognizes outstanding student leaders who have created or played a significant leadership role in initiatives that promote access, equity, or social justice in their school and community.

- **Golden Gavel Award** The recipient shall be an individual, group, association, or firm that has made an outstanding contribution to public education in the state of Washington.
- **D.A. Davidson Barbara Martens Legacy Award** \$1,000 gift presented to an individual/group who has had a significant impact on Washington's public education.
- **Service to WASA Award** The recipient shall have made contributions at the state level toward the goals of WASA.
- **WASA Leadership Award** Recipient is a WASA Active Member who demonstrates and exemplifies outstanding leadership abilities and who has made significant contributions to the field of education statewide.

DON'T FORGET TO VOTE

Elections for WASA Board of Directors positions will take place from **March 2–March 9**.

- Superintendent Component Chair-elect—Joey Castilleja, Mabton
- Instructional Program Administrators (IPAC) Chair-elect—Denise Daniels, Fife | Asha Riley, Woodland
- Business and Personnel Administrators Component (BPAC)—Jill Pratt, Rochester
- Special Education Component Chair—John Sander, Franklin Pierce



Electronic ballots, which will include individual bios, will be sent to members of the components listed above on March 2. Thanks to those candidates willing to step up to serve the WASA membership!

ESSENTIAL EQUITY CONVERSATIONS



School district leaders are called upon to create systems and learning environments where each and every student can learn and achieve their educational goals and aspirations. This is the core of your work. Although each school district's journey toward educational equity varies based on its unique district and community assets and challenges, initiating and advancing substantive conversations is fundamental to effective and principled school district leadership. Each month we offer a prompt that you might employ to initiate or continue conversations with and among students, staff, school boards, and/or your community. Two forms of the prompt are offered, so that you are able to differentiate based upon the uniqueness of the group or community, as you step into these essential conversations:

- ***What is a practice you've adopted, or are considering, to increase the diversity of your employees?***
- ***What is a practice you've adopted, or are considering, to increase the racial diversity of your employees?***

While WASA members possess an abundance of strategies and protocols in their repertoire to facilitate focused and productive conversations, some simple, yet effective protocols can be found [here](#).

No matter where things stand in your district and community today, the important thing is to start or continue, and persist in your efforts to keep the focus on the students—ALL students—under your care.



TIME TO ENGAGE WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS

The 2023 Legislative Session has reached its mid-point. Even with a scheduled April 23 end date starting to come into focus, much work remains to be done. In addition to the hundreds of bills still to be moved from one house to the other, as they continue through the legislative journey, budget talks are right around the corner. The next quarterly Revenue Forecast, which legislators will use to finalize their budget proposals, will be released on March 20. This will trigger the release of legislative budget proposals for the 2023–25 biennium. By tradition, it is the House’s turn to begin the budget process; however, in recent years that tradition has been fading. Regardless, we expect at least one Operating Budget proposal to be released the week of March 20.

With the imminent unveiling of budget proposals, you can be sure that budget-writers have been hard at work crafting the two (House and Senate) Operating Budgets (as well as two-year Capital and Transportation Budgets). It is incumbent on school administrators to remind legislators of your funding needs before the budgets are complete because, while it will not be impossible, it will likely be difficult to get budget-writers to make wholesale changes to their initial proposals.

WASA’s main focus on budget issues continues to center on Special Education funding and Pupil Transportation funding. For special education, what we NEED to eliminate the funding gap between what school districts expend and what the state provides is \$800 million. Neither of the current bills on the table would come close to that figure and we continue to plead with the Legislature to provide the largest investment possible. **SB 5311** would increase special education funding by \$352 million in 2023–25; however, the tiered multipliers would only increase in the 2023–24 school year, meaning the funding gap would continue to grow in the out-years. Additionally, the Senate bill proposes to increase, rather than remove, the current enrollment funding cap. The House’s **HB 1436** would phase in over four years tiered multiplier increases; however, those increased rates are smaller than what the Senate proposes in a single year. Positively, HB 1436 would eliminate the funding cap—but not until the 2027–28 school year. The House’s bill would increase special education by \$168 million.

Similar to special education, there is a gap between what most districts pay to transport students and what the current funding model provides. Two bills continue to move for pupil transportation, **SB 5174** and **HB 1248**. As introduced, both bills would have increased funding and adjusted the transportation funding formula, making it more transparent and predictable. Unfortunately, both bills have been dramatically limited and now focus on a new safety net process for special passengers (special education, homeless, and foster students). SB 5174 also requires an analysis and recommendation for formula changes by OSPI; however, a report is not due until June 2026, which will push back any implementation of a final solution until at least 2027. HB 1248 does not include this analysis, and includes concerning provisions requiring school districts with pupil transportation contracts to ensure contractors provide health and pension benefits similar to those received by school employees. This would prove to be very costly to districts because it can be assumed these additional costs would be passed onto districts.

Not surprising, these two priorities were the focus of our 2023 Legislative Conference. For additional background and talking points, check out the “**Hot Topics**,” along with other **Conference Resources** to assist you in continuing the fight with your colleagues. Beyond these two major issues, there are multiple additional issues we continue to work on and will continue throughout the remainder of the session. Continue to follow **TWIO** and **WASA’s Legislative Podcast** for up-to-date information—and continue your engagement with legislators.

RESOURCES



WASA has developed a storehouse where resources from past issues of WASA News are **readily accessible**. This month's featured resources include a focus on Social Emotional Learning and Equity:

SEL AND EQUITY

- **The Current State of Social Emotional Learning in Schools** (Hanover Research)
- **These Three Strategies Could Help Avert School Based Violence** (Ed Week)
- **Establishing Structures for Student Voice** (Hanover Research)
- **4 Actions Districts and States Can Take to Increase Staff Diversity** (Ed Week)
- **Research Brief: Building a Sense of Belonging** (Hanover Research)

OTHER

- **Five Tips for Maintaining Teacher-Student Trust as AI Classroom Use Grows** (K-12 Dive)
- **Teacher Recruitment and Retention** (Hanover Research)



IN LOVING MEMORY

John "Jack" Fotheringham

1933 - 2022

Kindly join us for a

Celebration of Life

Saturday, June 3rd, 2023

Hillcrest Lodge Park

1717 South 13th

Mt. Vernon, WA 98274

12:00-4:00 PM

Noon- 2:00 pm: Mingle/Lunch/Drinks

2:00 pm: Celebration

3:00 - 4:00: Sundaes and farewells

Please RSVP using the link

<https://www.eventcreate.com/e/jackfotheringham>

Or text/call Kaila at 702-375-6685





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AASA CORNER

THE SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION

- New Scholarship in Support of Aspiring Latino/a Leaders—**The Daniel A. Domenech Scholarship**. This scholarship seeks to support aspiring superintendents that due to financial hardship are unable to participate in the academy. The scholarship will provide up to \$3,500 in financial support to educational leaders who wish to apply for the [Aspiring Superintendents Academy® For Latino And Latina Leaders](#). [Click here to apply](#). Deadline: March 8, 2023.
- [AASA Quarterly Federal Policy Update](#)



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