

DECEMBER 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](#).



*"AI is not disappearing; it's rapidly evolving. Schools ignoring AI risk falling behind in educational innovation, personalized learning, and preparing students for a tech-driven future. Embracing AI ensures competitiveness, efficiency, and relevance, enhancing the overall educational experience for both educators and students."*

—ChatGPT response to the prompt:

*"50 words—Is AI here to stay? What are the implications for school leaders ignoring AI?"*

Friends and Colleagues,

Recently, I read a brief article: "**Why Power Skills are critical for helping students succeed in the age of AI**". I played with ChatGPT for about five minutes, adjusting my prompt just twice. My final prompt was: "Please draft a 200-word summary for school district leaders (including implications), of the following article: *Why Power Skills are critical for helping students succeed in the age of AI*."

ChatGPT's unedited response:

**The article emphasizes the critical role of Power Skills in preparing students for an AI-driven future. President Biden's AI executive order signals the rapid expansion of AI's influence. As schools adapted to the pandemic with Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), the article contends that for future success, students need Power Skills, including critical thinking, creativity, and technological literacy. Mental models, such as first principles thinking, are highlighted as essential tools for understanding and adapting to an ever-evolving world. The article suggests that SEL, soft skills, and mental models work synergistically, enhancing each other.**

**School district leaders are urged to move beyond traditional SEL approaches, integrating Power Skills and mental models. The NXTLVL program offers a unique solution, immersing students in team-based complex problems to rapidly develop soft skills and mental models. The approach involves facilitation and coaching rather than direct instruction, providing students with practical skills for the modern world. The article underscores the necessity for schools to embrace a transformative shift in educational practices to equip students for an AI-powered future, emphasizing that Power Skills are no longer a debate but a necessity. District leaders are encouraged to explore innovative solutions like NXTLVL to ensure students gain a head start on the future.**

In considering the intersection of AI and education, the urgency should be clear. The future for our students is undeniably interconnected with Artificial Intelligence. AI is here, whether we like it or not. The young people in your schools will be utilizing AI, whether you embrace this fast-emerging technology, or not.

Currently, leaders in school districts have the chance to actively develop educational practices that prepare students for success in a future where artificial intelligence will play a pervasive role in their daily lives. As AI becomes an integral part of our evolving landscape, there should be urgency to reshape educational practice. Fully leveraged, this can be a transformative opportunity where schools become incubators for innovation in their work to prepare students for an uncertain, albeit exciting future.

Happy holidays,



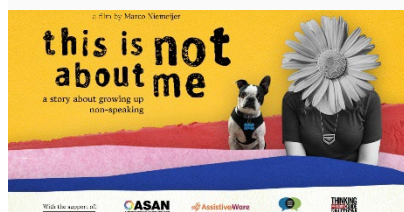
G. Joel Aune  
WASA Executive Director



## WA Superintendent of the Year Announced!

Congratulations to Dr. Laurie Dent of Sumner-Bonney Lake SD for being named Washington Superintendent of the Year 2024! Dr. Dent will attend the AASA National Conference on Education in San Diego, CA this February and is automatically eligible to be nominated as National Superintendent of the Year. You can see all past WA Superintendents of the year [here](#).

# UPCOMING WASA EVENTS



**This is Not About Me Film Screening & Forum**  
Virtual  
December 7 | 4–6 p.m.



**WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP: Women Support Women...But do We?**  
Virtual | Complimentary  
December 12 | 12–1 p.m.



**Lunch & Learn: School Funding Coalition 2024 Priorities**  
Virtual  
December 13 | 12–1 p.m.



**CALL FOR PROPOSALS: Summer Conference 2024**  
Spokane  
Due by December 18



**WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP: Powerful Leadership: The Role of Trust, Self-efficacy, and Feedback**  
Virtual  
January 12 | 8:30-11 a.m.



**Legislative Conference & Day on the Hill**  
South Puget Sound Community College  
January 28 & 29



### Connect with Us

Be sure to follow us on **Facebook**, **Instagram**, and **Twitter** for information on upcoming conferences and workshops, legislative news and updates, and

school news.

### Update Your Profile

If you haven't already, please help us keep our membership directory up to date by taking a moment to upload your photo to your WASA member profile page. Contact Sheila

Chard at [schard@wasa-oly.org](mailto:schard@wasa-oly.org) if you have questions or need assistance.



## WASA's TPEP Survey Extended to December 23

Since last spring, WASA leadership has been working with AWSP on matters related to the health and sustainability of the principalship. One area that we have been focusing upon is teacher evaluation. We are now at a point where your input and perspective are needed in response to the question, "What modifications could be made to TPEP in an effort to have a meaningful, yet manageable evaluation system?" To gather your feedback, we're using a tool called ThoughtExchange. The voices of all WASA members matter, so your participation is essential.

Click the link to learn more and participate: <https://tejoin.com/scroll/456451025>

Your thoughts and stars are confidential. You can come back as often as you'd like to participate, and in fact, we ask that you return to rate some of the new ideas shared since you first participated. The ratings will help us understand the most important areas to focus on.

If you need technical help, please call Thought Exchange at 1.800.361.9027 ext. 4 or email [help@thoughtexchange.com](mailto:help@thoughtexchange.com)



## 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 offering. 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 code above or [click here](#) to take the survey.

# WASHINGTON STATE PURPLE STAR AWARD

*In support of our military students & families*



## APPLY NOW!

Applications open through February 16, 2024



Washington Office of Superintendent of  
**PUBLIC INSTRUCTION**



**Purple Star Recognition—Application Now Available**



Washington state was recently approved for Purple Star designation. The Purple Star program is designed to recognize school districts that support military-connected children and families. OSPI has asked WASA to design and execute implementation of the Purple Star recognition program here in Washington. To learn more, visit our website: <http://wasa-oly.org/PurpleStar>.

**Apply now!** Applications for the 2023–24 school year are being accepted **November 30, 2023 – February 16, 2024**.

## WASA Management Review

Be reminded WASA offers a Management Review service to members. The WASA Management Review process has been refined through the completion of over 130 reviews in several states and at the college and ESD levels. The overall objective of a review is to provide expert assessment of all aspects of school district management—the results are designed to be both an in-depth analysis of what is, and a blueprint for what can be. Management Reviews are conducted by review teams of recognized, expert practitioners in consultation with school district administration. Contact **Andy Wolf** for more information on the WASA Management Review service.

## Are Your CBAs Current with the Law?

As you begin to prepare for another bargaining cycle, it is considered best practice to have current CBAs reviewed by legal counsel. Much has changed over the past few years, and there may be portions of your current CBAs that are not current with the law or contain problematic language.



Legislators will convene for the 60-day 2024 Legislative Session on January 8. With the new session coming into sight, the final pieces are being put in place that are necessary to begin. State agencies (including OSPI) submitted Supplemental Budget requests in September; the Economic & Review Forecast Council (ERFC) recently released its fourth and final quarterly state revenue update; the Caseload Forecast Council released its final update of entitlement caseloads; and Governor Inslee is set to release his 2024 Supplemental Budget proposals in the next few weeks. These events, mostly focused on the Supplemental Budgets, set the stage for the 2024 Session. At the same time, legislators have been finalizing their priorities—budget requests and policy requests—and have begun conversations with stakeholders.

There is not enough space to fully review all of these important issues in WASA News, so be on the lookout for a comprehensive discussion in an upcoming pre-session *This Week in Olympia (TWIO)* newsletter. Just a few quick clips here.

Agency requests seek funding increases of just over four percent beyond the original 2023–25 Operating Budget. That may not seem to be a large increase; however, given the current budget appropriations of \$69.8 billion, those “minor” requests are over \$2.9 billion. Agency requests range from a 37 percent increase in funding for the Department of Commerce (\$448.3 million) to a 1.2 percent increase in K-12 education funding (\$349.7 million). Regarding K-12, Superintendent Reykdal made a significant departure from his bold 2023-25 budget request that would have increased funding to K-12 education by \$5.9 billion (an increase of 25 percent over the previous budget). For the Supplemental Budget, Reykdal fell back to the more pragmatic budget requests he has released since he was first elected State Superintendent. It is important to also understand that more than half of his request (\$193.2 million) is for a controversial increase in paraeducator compensation. And it is also important to know that, if adopted, there would be a significant budget bow wave of \$510.3 million in 2025–27 and increasing from there.

It is interesting to put the overall \$2.9 billion agency requests in context with available revenue. The ERFC’s November revenue forecast projected legislators will have \$2.9 billion more than anticipated when the original 2023–25 Operating

Budget was adopted. A coincidence? Probably not. It is unclear if budget-writers will be conservative, knowing the currently hot economy is starting to cool off (with revenue growth starting to flatten), or if they will again significantly increase the underlying budget. When the governor releases his budget requests, we will get a better idea about what he wants to do—and we'll be watching the reaction from legislators.

Regardless what the Legislature provides to K-12 in funding, we can be assured the budget will not include billions of dollars in federal pandemic funding. Will the Legislature do anything to backfill funding to address a coming ESSER cliff? It seems unlikely. It will also be important to keep a close eye on Maintenance Level funding (required adjustments for caseload costs). K-12 enrollment continues to be essentially flat and in the last few years, the Legislature has made significant reductions in the K-12 budget to address fluctuations in enrollment. (You might recall K-12 had a net reduction in funding in the 2022 Supplemental Budget.)

The bottom line? It will remain imperative that school administrators are actively engaged in the legislative process. We had some “wins” in the last few years (e.g., a significant increase in special education funding), and to date, we have avoided some potentially catastrophic losses (e.g., prejudgment interest); however, none of this would have been possible without the efforts of school administrators advocating on behalf of students and staff. We encourage you to continue to build relationships with your local legislators. You are the education “experts” and legislators need to hear from you, lest they be left to their own devices and make uninformed decisions for you.



### **Welcome to WASA, Heather!**

Heather Chard joined the WASA team in November and will serve as Dan Steele's administrative assistant. Heather lives in Olympia and comes to us most recently from Nisqually Red Wind Casino, where she worked as a Service & Training Coordinator, an Advertising Coordinator, and a Graphic Designer. She has extensive experience in graphic arts and digital content in addition to considerable experience as an administrative assistant.

### **WASA OFFICE SCHEDULE Happy Holidays!**

The WASA office will be closed for the holidays beginning Friday, December 22 and will reopen Monday, January 2.

# **RESOURCES**



This month's featured resources include:

- **2023 State of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Belonging | Hanover Research**
- **Building a Sense of Belonging | Hanover Research**
- **Use home visits to strengthen connections for newcomer students | K-12 Dive**
- **Bringing AI to School (ISTE Mini ebook final | [aasa.org](https://aasa.org))**
- **AI Guidance for Schools Toolkit | [TeachAI.org](https://TeachAI.org)**

- [The Future is Now: Harnessing the Potential of Artificial Intelligence in the Classroom | K-12 Dive](#)



**D.A. Davidson**

## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

This month's Sponsor Spotlight features WASA's Diamond-level sponsor—**D.A. Davidson**. We are grateful for their unwavering support of our members and programs! Click their link to learn more about them. View all of our amazing Diamond-level sponsors [on our website](#).



- **NCE Registration:** ASE registration is now open to National Conference on Education 2024.
- AASA named just keep livin Foundation as a strategic partner for the **Greenlights Grant Initiative**.



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