

MARCH 2024



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](#).



"The people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world are the ones who do."

—Steve Jobs

Friends and Colleagues,

The WASA Honorary Awards Committee has finalized plans for this year's effort to recognize individuals or groups who have made significant contributions to public education at the local, region, and state level. Details on our [2024 Honorary Awards Program](#) are included in this issue of WASA News.

WASA's Honorary Awards Program provides a variety of opportunities to recognize colleagues, students, and community partners who are working to support public education, schools, and students. This recognition and celebration may be more important now, than ever before.

In recent years, the pandemic, political divisiveness, and societal tensions have exposed the worst in some, while bringing out the best in others. Whether it be the incredible leadership that superintendents and school district leaders have brought to the table each day during the past year, the wonderfully generous support coming from partnerships—both old and new, the amazing achievements of our students, or the willingness of ordinary people to step up and offer assistance in extraordinary fashion, there are stories to tell that highlight the very best in communities across the entire state.

These inspiring stories abound, and need to be told. I hope you will take advantage of this opportunity to amplify those stories for all to hear. Public education, and all who encompass it, continues to be the backbone of our communities. Each day, selfless individuals are working for kids and making miracles happen. The WASA Honorary Awards Program is one way to tell these inspiring stories.

To facilitate nominations, the Honorary Awards Committee and WASA staff have streamlined the process, making it straightforward and efficient. Check out these opportunities and reach out to your region's [Honorary Awards Committee representative](#) to honor that colleague, student, or community partner that is touching the lives of the students in your schools.

Thank you for the hopeful vision and positive energy you bring to work each day. Know that you, along with so many individuals in your community, ARE making a difference.

With Respect,



G. Joel Aune
WASA Executive Director

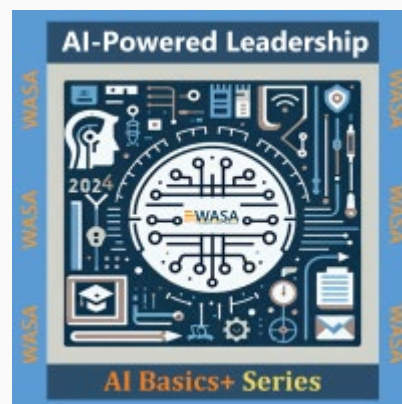
UPCOMING WASA EVENTS



WASA Spring Conference for Small School Leaders
Wenatchee
March 18–19
REGISTRATION OPENS JANUARY 9TH!



ERNN Regional Conference
April 16 in Tumwater, April 23 in Yakima,
April 25 in Spokane
8:30–2:30 p.m.
SAVE THE DATE!



AI Basics+ Series Lunch and Learn
Virtual | COMPLIMENTARY!
March 6 & 27 | 12–1 p.m.



WIL: Listen, Learn, and Lead from Ted Lasso
Virtual | COMPLIMENTARY!
March 13 | 12–1 p.m.



Women In Leadership Conference
Lake Chelan
May 4



Superintendents Conference
Lake Chelan
May 5–7



Lunch & Learn: Listening Activities for Budget Development, Strategic Planning, & Elections

Virtual | COMPLIMENTARY!

March 26 | 12–1 p.m.



AWSP/WASA Summer Conference 2024

Spokane

June 23–25, 2024

REMINDERS



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 Heather Chard at hchard@wasa-oly.org if you have questions or need assistance.



HOTLINE



WASA Hotline

In case you missed the most recent edition, a link to the January WASA Hotline can be found [here](#).



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.



Tim Garchow to Join the WASA Team

We are excited to announce that Tim Garchow has been selected as the Assistant Executive Director for Member Support and will become a member of the WASA leadership team starting July 1. Please join us in congratulating Tim. We are thrilled to have him join us in the work of serving and supporting all of you—the WASA membership. For more details, please see the full announcement [here](#).

WASA Management Reviews

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.

OSPI's Model Student Handbook Language: Feedback Requested

OSPI is seeking your feedback on [model student handbook language](#) that school districts will be required to use to notify students, families, and employees about important rights, complaint options, and contacts. OSPI invites your input on this draft, and are especially hopeful for feedback in the following areas:

- **Readability**—We are sharing legal and procedural information, so we welcome any recommendations on plain language, phrasing, and legal accuracy
- **Usefulness of information**—How do we provide useful information without overwhelming readers with details? We are not intending this handbook information to take the place of full district policies and procedures, and desire for this information to be "family-friendly"
- **Length of document**—Given this will be published in each school's student handbooks, we know space and printing costs could be an issue

OSPI is required to post this handbook language online by July 1, 2024. **Please provide any feedback by the end of the day on Thursday, March 7, 2024.**

WSSRA's Pre-Retirement Zoom Webinars

The Washington State School Retirees' Association is sponsoring a set of two pre-retirement webinars (March 14 and 19 at 4:30 pm). These webinars are designed for those within one to five years of retirement from any K-12 public school district, or ESD.

WSSRA has sponsored these events since 2020 with strongly positive reviews. The presenters are agency employees or VEBA representatives who are well versed in their respective fields.

You can access more detailed information and register for these webinars via our website www.wssra.org under the webinars tab. See also the [webinar flyer](#).

Finally, please pass this information along to teachers and classified employees who may be interested in learning more about the complexities of retirement planning.

Thanks for your assistance in getting the word out about these important events.

Celebrating Innovation in Education: The Launch of WASA's Learning from Leaders Award

WASA is thrilled to announce a new State Award: **The WASA Learning from Leaders Award**, debuting at the Summer Conference in Spokane this June. This prestigious award, including a \$5,000 grant, honors exceptional leadership and innovation in education. It's made possible by founding sponsors Dennis Ray, Gay Selby, and Gene Sharratt, in partnership with WASA. This award is more than a recognition; it celebrates visionary leadership and underscores the importance of sharing best practices in education. The application for this award will be available later this month.

Gallagher – Howard M. Coble Scholarship

Designed to assist talented, under-represented educators to pursue graduate studies that prepare for central office leadership positions. A \$5,000 scholarship will be awarded to an educator who is presently enrolled in or will begin graduate studies in educational leadership by the fall of 2024. Gallagher provides the funding for this scholarship opportunity.



The 2024 application is now open! You can submit your application by selecting [this link](#). The application will be open from February 14, 2024, until 5:00 p.m. on March 27, 2024.

Piper Sandler – Doyle E. Winter Scholarship



Designed to assist talented and committed educational administrators as they enhance those skills and abilities needed to serve as educational leaders in the field of public education, a \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a school administrator who is presently in or will begin a doctoral program in education.

The 2024 Application is now open! You can submit your application by selecting [this link](#). The application will be open from February 28, 2024, until 5:00 p.m. on April 3, 2024.

Candidates for WASA President-Elect

Candidates nominated for 2024–25 WASA President-elect are Shaun Carey (Enumclaw) and Mary Templeton (Washougal). Congratulations to both on being nominated to serve as the 2024–25 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.



Shaun Carey



Mary Templeton

TIME TO ENGAGE WITH YOUR LEGISLATORS

As this issue of WASA News goes to press, the 2024 Legislature is a few days from adjourning. At this point, we have not seen a final 2024 Supplemental Operating Budget or a 2024 Supplemental Capital Budget; however, some key outcomes can be predicted.

First, the Capital Budget. As we expected before the session even convened, there was a heavy conversation about school construction, and it appears those conversations will result in a positive final budget for K–12 education. In fact, given initial proposals from the House and Senate, the 2024 Supplemental Capital Budget could be the most supportive school facilities budget we have seen in a long time. While it is likely there will be a net loss in funding for the School Construction Assistance Program (SCAP)—due to less school district requests for funding because of higher bond failures than expected—we believe there will be additional support to enhance SCAP formulas. The Small District and Tribal Compact Schools Modernization program is expected to receive a significant boost for both planning grants and construction grants. Climate issues were prevalent across the board this session and will likely result in significant support for school district indoor air quality issues, including: heating, ventilation, and air conditioning HVAC systems, air filtration enhancement, and energy efficiency improvements. Finally, the House proposed to fully review the current SCAP and develop a new funding model; it appears this will be a part of the final package. If so, we will work with our WAMOA and WASBO partners (among others) to engage in the discussion.

While we expect good news in the Capital Budget, the other side of the coin is the 2024 Supplemental Operating Budget. We fought all session to persuade legislators to increase the size of the K–12 funding “box”—which we were told since Day One, would be small. This is just a guess, but based on the House and Senate proposals, it is probable the total increased funding for K–12 will be near \$500.0 million, with \$190.5 million appropriated for Maintenance Level issues and the remainder (less than \$300.0 million) for Policy Level issues—which would equate to an increase of less than one percent. To put that into context, the overall Operating Budget is expected to increase near three percent. Currently, K–12 education funding occupies 43.7 percent of the overall Operating Budget (down from a peak of 52

percent in 2019). If funding levels are adopted as predicted, K–12's share of the Operating Budget will continue to decline.

For the Operating Budget, details are even more murky than the Capital Budget; however, from movement of legislation and conversations with budget-writers, it is expected there will be an increase in per pupil allocations for Materials, Supplies, and Operating Costs (MSOC). The increase will be much less than our requested funding and nowhere near what school districts need; however, even a minor boost will help administrators meet increasing costs of running their school districts. Another positive: the funding likely will begin in THIS Fiscal Year and impact the current 2023–24 school year. We fought hard to defeat the proposals from Superintendent Reykdal and Governor Inslee that would have mandated significant increases for paraeducators—while at the same time we advocated for increased staffing ratios for paraeducators and other classified staff as a part of the Prototypical School Funding Model. Both houses have adopted legislation to provide these enhancements, and like the MSOC funding, it appears the funding boost will begin in the current Fiscal Year, providing assistance in the current 2023–24 school year. The funding for this component of the Prototypical School Funding Model will probably no longer simply be “for allocation purposes only,” although the restrictions appear to be somewhat flexible. A third important presumed funding increase is for the special education funding cap. Governor Inslee proposed a 17.25 percent cap, which the House accepted. The Senate initially proposed a 15.6 cap, but later changed that to 16.0 percent. We have not heard what a final compromise may be; however, it is sure to be between 16.0 and 17.25 percent. Some would say the odds are it will be closer to 16.0 percent because the Senate can argue they already moved to compromise.

Even though (the presumed) K–12 funding in the Operating Budget is disappointing, we surely would have received even less if school administrators had not engaged as vigorously and regularly as they did. Continual engagement with your local legislators did not secure all the wins we would have wished; however, keeping the pressure on impacted decisions. Now, stay tuned to *This Week in Olympia (TWIO)* for details of the final budgets.

Also, please note that WASA staff is already in process of producing our annual End of Session Report, with a comprehensive review of the outcomes of this session. The Report will include full details of the 2024 Supplemental Operating Budget and the 2024 Supplemental Capital Budget, along with a wide-ranging review of the many education-related bills the Legislature addressed this session. After the governor takes action on bills and the dust settles, the Report will be emailed to all *TWIO* subscribers (**and available on the WASA website**).

RESOURCES



This month's featured resources include:

- **Benchmarking Supportive Attendance Practices** | Hanover Research
- **3 Ways Schools are Taking Classes Outside to Expand Mindfulness** | K-12 Dive
- **AI Spotlight: A Series of Articles on AI** | Education Week
- **The Future is Artificial Intelligence. Are Students Ready?** | K-12 Dive



SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT



Clear Risk Solutions

This month's Sponsor Spotlight features WASA's Diamond-level sponsor—**Clear Risk Solutions**. 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**.



Washington Association of School Administrators
PO Box 14459, Tumwater, WA 98511 | 800.859.9272

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