



Direct

Washington State School Directors' Association

OCTOBER 2014

2014 ELECTION RESULTS

The ballots are in!

Congratulations to the 2015 officers. The Nominating Committee has counted the ballots and its findings are official. Find out who won on page 5.

2014 MEMBER SURVEY

We listen to what our members say

The biennial WSSDA survey of school board members opened September 24 with an email notification and link. Results from the survey will be used to improve WSSDA's services and establish priorities for the next two years.

"I was pretty new at WSSDA during the last survey," said Communications Director Michael Wilson, "but I was amazed at how both the staff and the board jumped on the survey results and suggestions in an effort to improve the association."

The online survey is easy to access and takes only about 15 minutes to complete.

The survey allows school directors to evaluate WSSDA's products and services and outline what they see as the biggest challenges in their districts. The survey results will also provide data on why school board members run, how much time they spend at the job and how they

MEMBER SURVEY, CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

OUR KIDS OUR FUTURE

Assembly speaks out on education funding as required in McCleary

September's WSSDA Legislative Assembly in Yakima attracted 125 delegates from 85 school districts across the state. The Assembly approved 45 new positions, added 16 proposals to WSSDA's Standing Legislative Positions (SLPs) and amended three existing SLPs.

Each district then ranked the new proposals and SLPs in priority order. Results of that vote will be considered by the Legislative Committee in October and a "short list" of top priorities for the 2015 legislative session will be adopted by the WSSDA Board of Directors in November.

Hot topics discussed at the Assembly included a scorcher: How to fund K-12 education as required in McCleary. A week before the WSSDA Legislative Assembly, the Supreme Court found Washington state in contempt and threatened sanctions if the legislature does not finalize a plan, before the end of the 2015 session, to amply fund K-12 basic education.

At Pre-Assembly on Friday, delegates heard from legislators on both sides of the aisle, the governor's office and stakeholders about McCleary funding.

ASSEMBLY, CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



WSSDA staff members (from left to right) Terri Eixenberger, Rachel Ward, Nan Laughton, Megan Simmons and Michael Wilson were poised and ready to lend a helping hand to attendees of the Legislative Assembly. Over 200 people attended the event in Yakima.

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Innovative Schools Tour of Barge Lincoln Elementary in Yakima



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Alan Burke

Cranking up the heat on Congress

Most of you have been following the news on the loss of Washington's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waiver. Much was written and said in mid-August as AYP "failure" letters were distributed. This letter went to all parents at schools that receive Title I funds and did not achieve 100% proficiency in 45 different "cells" or categories set by the US Department of Education.

You also are probably aware that the WSSDA Board acted swiftly and strongly to protest the waiver removal. The board secured help from the NSBA to begin a nation-wide campaign to do what everyone knows needs to be done — reauthorize ESEA. This act expired in 2007 but is still in effect today. In an effort to get Congress to act, letters have been written, Congressional delegations have been contacted, and federal education officials have been engaged in conversations with WSSDA and NSBA leadership.

All of this is important and necessary, but has it caused any action on the part of Congress? The short answer is no, or at least not yet. However, in the past few weeks Congress has, in a bipartisan fashion, reached agreement on a child care development block grant and an educational research support bill, and passed a continuing resolution to keep the government running until December 11.

In addition, most observers are optimistic that after the election, the House and Senate can quickly come to consensus on a 2015 spending bill. In short, Congress has proved it can work in a bipartisan fashion to get educational issues resolved. Unfortunately, ESEA reauthorization is THE big educational issue left to tackle and, predictably, is full of political intrigue and partisan bickering. But, there is hope on ESEA reauthorization — and advocacy efforts must continue.

To that end, WSSDA leadership recently met with Congressman Rick Larsen and Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, scheduled meetings with Representatives Jaime Herrera Beutler and David Reichert, and has met or conversed with key staff for Senator Patty Murray and Representatives Denny Heck, Suzan Del Bene and Derek Kilmer.

Importantly, all advise the same strategy — keep up contacts with Congress, and provide them with reasons why reauthorization is necessary.

One of the ways that you can help out is to have your district approve the WSSDA-sponsored "Reauthorize ESEA" resolution that more than 130 of your fellow school boards have signed. Thanks to those of you that already have passed the resolution! In a few weeks, we are going to send each member of our Congressional delegation a list of the districts that have approved the resolution, broken down by Congressional district.

To be sure, we want to show our representatives and senators that school directors are united in their quest to seek reauthorization and that we very much would like their help to get that done. Really, we need to lead this effort. As one of two states to lose the waiver — Oklahoma is the other one — we are the most affected. And, if bipartisanship works for child care and research, it ought to work to get ESEA revised and updated!

feel about the work they do.

The results will be released in coming editions of the WSSDA Direct.

This simple online survey is undertaken every two years. The results are compared to those from prior surveys to help WSSDA and all school directors understand the key education issues our K-12 schools and school boards face and how we can address them. It is very important to us and your fellow school board members that your voice is heard.

Some of the changes implemented as a result of the last survey were outlined in the August WSSDA Direct. Among others, they included changes to the Boards of Distinction program, the use of social media and research publications.

The survey is strictly confidential. Upon completion, you will be given the opportunity to enter into a drawing to win one of three free registrations for WSSDA's Annual Conference in Spokane, November 19-22 — a \$530 value.

Emails containing instructions and a link to the survey were sent on September 24, 2014. If you did not receive this email, or have lost it, please contact Michael Wilson at m.wilson@wssda.org or 360.252.3013.

Have you heard the news?



For the first time in Annual Conference history, the web and mobile application, WSSDA 2014, will be available to all attendees.

WSSDA 2014, launching in November, is a free download that will be available in the iTunes store for Apple devices and the Google Play Store for android devices.

"The app is very easy to use, but staff will be on hand to get people started and answer questions," said Bernadette Fong, WSSDA's IT Manager. "I think people will quickly find that they prefer the web-based app to a printed program. It's much more interactive."

The app allows attendees to view and set personal agendas, network with other attendees, participate in polls and surveys, view exhibitor materials, submit session evaluations and post to social media accounts.

Onsite help will be available during the conference, including help with downloading the app and learning about key features. Look for WSSDA staff at the charging station located near the registration desk.

Stay tuned for more details as the conference gets closer. Attendees will receive detailed instructions to download WSSDA 2014 as well as a quick reference guide to get started.

National NSBA award program now accepting nominations

The Magna Awards program is accepting award nominations for this year through October 31.

The national program — co-sponsored by American School Board Journal, the National School Boards Association, and Sodexo — honors school board best practices and innovative programs that advance student learning.

For the past 20 years, the Magna Awards panel of independent judges has reviewed programs that showcase school district leadership, creativity, and commitment to student achievement. Last year, the state had two districts winning these prestigious awards, Vancouver and Kent.

The program is open to any school district in the United States or the U.S. Virgin Islands that is a member of its state school boards' association. Nominations are judged according to three enrollment categories (under 5,000 enrollment; 5,000-20,000 enrollment; and over 20,000 enrollment) with one Grand Prize Winner in each category. Each Grand Prize Winner receives a \$5,000 contribution from Sodexo. There are five additional winners and five honorable mention winners within each enrollment category.

Nominations must be made via an online form. Visit www.nsba.org/events/magna-awards for more information.



Photo courtesy of Kent School District.

Kent School District was one of three grand prize winners of the 2014 Magna Awards Program. Vancouver Public Schools also received an award.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Open Government Training

Thursday, November 20

4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Friday, November 21

10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Seating is limited. Be sure to reserve your spot early. www.eventbrite.com/e/open-government-training-esb-5964-registration-12761194075



PRESIDENT
Mari Taylor

Compassion, courage and commitment for change

As a long time school board member, I've participated in more than a few discussions on the role of the board in student learning. It's a touchy subject.

Our student achievement data is easy to own when the numbers are improving, but with backslides or even stubborn plateaus, it would be easier to point a finger at the challenges facing many of our kids and communities and just run up the white flag.

The seemingly insurmountable challenges that characterize the lives of our most at-risk children can intimidate even the most passionate advocate.

At WSSDA we have been holding lots of conversations about school directors' role in student achievement, discussing both successes and challenges alike. We know it is our job to help ensure the success of ALL of Washington's students. Tough as it is, we have to face up to the trials created by the many opportunity gaps in our system.

We have a strong history of supporting cultural diversity and equity. The board feels that now is the time to revitalize that conversation and help our fellow school directors address disparities with courage and determination. There is no room here for either pointing fingers or making excuses. It's time to work together to understand barriers to student success and build solutions.

Our annual conference provides many opportunities to engage in this conversation. We have sessions scheduled on student achievement, understanding data, racial and ethnic issues, poverty, early learning initiatives, discipline and many other important topics related to student achievement.

We are also working to identify barriers that keep people from running for office and or keep others from recruiting school board members who reflect our students and communities. In addition, the WSSDA Board is initiating board development in cultural diversity and promotion of existing resources that support our mission.

Clearly understanding and resolving the issues of opportunity and equity will be a long trek. As we begin to unpack the data surrounding our students at risk of failure, it becomes immediately apparent that we will need compassion, courage and commitment to bring about the kind of change we would all like to see.

For starters we can ask ourselves two questions: What are we doing that makes things better and what are we doing that makes things worse?



ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Cultural diversity conversations to inform WSSDA's role in support

WSSDA would like to learn how we can better support and include school directors of minority representation across the state. To open the discussion, diversity caucuses will be held early Thursday morning during Annual Conference. There will also be open discussion about the role that WSSDA can and should play in promoting cultural diversity.

Facilitators include:

- Harriem Martin-Morris, Seattle School Board African-American Caucus
- Aurora Flores, WSSDA Board Director, Manson School Board Hispanic Caucus
- My-Lin Thai, Bellevue School Board Asian Caucus
- Cindy Kelly, WSSDA Board Director, Port Angeles School Board Native American Caucus

Elections

Play an important role in WSSDA leadership by nominating, running for, or voting for board representatives and standing committee members in your director area. Find the full list of positions up for election at www.wssda.org/AboutUs/Officers-BoardofDirectors/WSSDAElections2014. Elections are held during the Caucus Meetings, Friday, November 21 at 8:30 a.m.

New this year

- We are holding a food drive in partnership with Northwest Harvest. Please bring goods to help feed hungry kids and families in our state.
- Early-bird registration is open 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. at the DoubleTree on Wednesday. Conference registration opens Thursday morning in the Spokane Convention Center's Grand Ballroom Foyer near the large windows.
- Student representatives will have time to meet Thursday morning at breakfast and Friday evening at their own social hour.
- Boards of the Year awards will take place at Thursday's luncheon.

WSSDA 2014 Conference app

We encourage all conference attendees to download the WSSDA 2014 mobile app to view the full conference program and engage with fellow attendees. An abbreviated printed program will be on hand for those that do not have mobile devices. WSSDA staff and select "street team" members will be wearing neon lanyards to help you get started. Look for them roaming throughout the event or at the charging station to help you get started. (See story on page 2 for more details)

Haigh honored as hero in education



Legislator and former school board member Kathy Haigh will be honored at this year's WSSDA Annual Conference with the association's Hero in Education award. The award is WSSDA's highest honor and given for significant state or national support of public education.

Haigh served on the Southside School Board and has been a state representative since 1999. She was nominated for the award by school director Neal Kirby of the Centralia School District.

"Representative Haigh's passion for equity in education and her commitment to all of Washington's students is illustrated by much of the work she has done over her career," said WSSDA President Mari Taylor. "She has a keen understanding of the finer points of education funding and a great resolve to support quality education for each of our public school children."

In nominating Haigh, Kirby called Haigh "a strong believer in equity in education" and the taxes that support it, as well as a "long-time supporter of ample funding for all schools." He noted that she fought for state funding for all-day kindergarten and championed the elimination of the 60 percent supermajority vote to pass a school levy.

"On the timber money," Kirby wrote, "Representative Haigh went to bat for a group of poorer schools that otherwise would not have had the clout to win this bill. She truly is a "Hero in Education."

Kirby's praise was echoed by Dana Anderson of the Capital Region ESD 113 and Jim Kowalkowski of Davenport, two superintendents who provided supporting letters.

Kowalkowski called Haigh's efforts on the timber bill "instrumental in getting this bill passed." Anderson cited Haigh's work in support of both that bill and dropout prevention and re-engagement in his letter.

"Representative Haigh is open-minded, approachable and engaged in the ongoing work of schools and community," Anderson wrote. "Building Bridges (a dropout prevention/re-engagement program) remains a model of district and community partnership, with strong evidence of success in communities as diverse as Shelton and Granite Falls."

Haigh is currently the chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Education. She represents the 35th District, which stretches from well south of Shelton to north of Belfair.

Taylor will present Haigh with the award during the November 20 general session luncheon. Haigh is the second person to receive the award. Sen. Rosemary McAuliffe, who represents the 1st District that includes Bothell, received the first award in 2012. The award is not given every year. Nominations for any year are due May 31. The award is given based on majority approval by the WSSDA Board.



PRESIDENT
Chris Nieuwenhuis



PRESIDENT-ELECT
Chris Nation



VICE PRESIDENT
Joanne Greer

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

Delegate Assembly 101

Q. What is the purpose of Delegate Assembly?

A. The Delegate Assembly is the annual meeting of one voting member from each school board in the state to amend WSSDA's Permanent Positions, adjust annual dues (when necessary), amend the WSSDA Bylaws and conduct other business that may properly come before it. (Source: WSSDA Bylaws, Article XI. Association Meetings, Section 2. Delegate Assemblies, Items A, B, and G)

Q. What is a WSSDA permanent position?

A. Each year WSSDA requests proposals from school boards in order to update its permanent positions. Members may recommend the association take a position on a new issue or that it amend an existing position. The WSSDA permanent positions describe the association's stance on issues of widespread concern for its membership, other education organizations and the general public, as well as represent the association's beliefs and values as viewed by its membership. The permanent positions are advisory to individual school boards as well as to other organizations and educational stakeholders.

Q. Where can I locate the existing WSSDA permanent positions?

A. Existing WSSDA Permanent Positions are available online at www.wssda.org/AboutUs/HowWeAreGoverned/Bylaws,OperatingPoliciesandPositions.

Q. How do I make a proposal?

A. Instructions for submission and frequently asked questions are made available on the WSSDA website/Resolutions Committee page, at www.wssda.org/AboutUs/CommitteesandTaskForces/ResolutionsCommittee. The 2015 Association Permanent Positions Proposal Form will be made available in May 2015. The submittal deadline for 2015 is Wednesday, September 16th.

Q. When will the agenda for this year's Delegate Assembly be available?

A. The 2014 Delegate Assembly Handbook will be published to the WSSDA website on Friday, October 24th, at www.wssda.org/AboutUs/HowWeAreGoverned/DelegateAssembly.

Q. Can more than one member of an individual school board attend the Delegate Assembly?

A. Yes. Under the assembly's rules of procedure, more than one member of a board may attend the assembly, but only one member at a time may be in possession of the board's credentials for purposes of participating in debate or voting on any matter before the assembly. (Source: Operating Policy #1280, Delegate Assembly, Item J)

Q. Where can I locate more information about the Delegate Assembly?

- A.**
- www.wssda.org/AboutUs/HowWeAreGoverned/Bylaws,OperatingPoliciesandPositions.
 - WSSDA Bylaws
Article XI Association Meetings, Section 2 Delegate Assemblies
 - WSSDA Operating Policies
#1280 Delegate Assembly, #1280P Delegate Assembly Rules of Procedure, #1300 Delegate Assembly – Special Meetings

The next day, roughly two-thirds of the assembly voted in favor of the following statement, brought forward by the WSSDA Legislative Committee:

“The Washington State School Directors’ Association urges the legislature to enhance state revenue in order to provide ample funding for K-12 education to comply with the Supreme Court order in the McCleary case. This must be accomplished without harming other parts of the state budget that support programs students need to be successful in school and in life.”

The Legislative Assembly also afforded several opportunities for new board members and veterans to talk about working on relationships with legislators this fall.

Legislators want to get to know you, too. And, it’s easier to get on their calendars

before session starts. You want them to recognize your name when you contact them during session and you want them to think of you when they have a question about education policy or funding.

- Schedule a one-on-one meeting over coffee or a Director Area legislative breakfast.
- Be prepared to talk with them about WSSDA’s top priorities and your own local issues.
- Offer school tours for legislators and their staff — give them an opportunity to spend time with kids.
- Invite them to school celebrations — the bigger the crowd of parents the better.
- Ask them to teach a class in their field of expertise or to talk with students about civics.

- Prepare a few recent stories that show how student learning in your district is impacted by the ongoing underfunding of K-12.

The Governor’s Office and the Legislature track calls and emails they receive from the public each week. They tell us they hear from a lot more folks concerned about higher education and social services than about K-12 education issues. Let’s turn that around.

- Call the Legislative hotline, 800.562.6000.
- Visit the Governor’s website to send him an e-message: <https://fortress.wa.gov/es/governor/>.

Let them know what you think about the pressing issues facing K-12 statewide and about your own local education issues. Call early and often!



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Additional photos from the Legislative Assembly are posted at www.flickr.com/wssda.

INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS TOUR

High expectations keep students and staff on track at Barge Lincoln

At Barge Lincoln Elementary School, administrators say the real turnaround began when they realized that sympathy was a poor substitute for high expectations for staff and students.

There is no question they face some daunting challenges. Ninety-nine percent of the students at the Yakima school are on free and reduced lunches, a measure used by education officials to indicate poverty.

But having shown dramatic gains in the past few years, including an 80 percent growth in mathematics compared to a state average of 50 percent, they are pretty confident they are on the right track and have a bright future.

Barge Lincoln is designated as a merit school, meaning that it qualified for additional federal funds in return for making big changes to the way it was doing business. These included a new administration and 10 new teachers.

Talk to Yakima's Superintendent, Elaine Beraza, and you'll quickly get the picture.

"There are five things you have to agree to if you want to work here," she says, quickly ticking them off to school directors visiting as part of the Innovative Schools Tour in September:

- All children can learn and you must have high expectations.
- You can make a personal difference.
- You are not self-employed.
- You operate under the school's improvement plan.
- Professional development is a must.
- You have to continue to learn.
- You are expected to work longer days.

And the students? The first item on their syllabus is learning how they are expected to behave in class. The school wants to minimize the need for discipline. A student who is expelled or suspended can't learn. So the goal is to do all that they can to keep the kids in the classroom.

The school board members and other guests visited classrooms to see first-hand how things were progressing. And they were impressed.

Ms. Rummel's 4th grade class was one of the stops. School board members watched as she did a "math talks" lesson.

Not even the abrupt arrival of 20 or so unknown adults took their attention away from the lesson. Even on picture day, dressed in their finest, they stayed focused on the task at hand, mastering the "standard algorithm."



Forty school board directors toured Barge Lincoln Elementary as part of the Innovative Schools Tour held during the Legislative Assembly. The popular tour, held for the third year in a row, also included a stop to Eisenhower High School in Yakima.

OUR KIDS OUR FUTURE

Chromebooks a game changer for BGPS

Technology, infrastructure, and state testing requirements have come together in Battle Ground Public Schools to create a perfect storm of web-based learning that have just hit the district's classrooms.

The district's technology department began delivering carts filled with Chromebook computers—2,400 in all—to every school in the district. The mobile device looks like a lightweight laptop, except that it is used specifically to work online or in the Cloud through the district's secure network.

The 2,400 Chromebooks will be distributed evenly to primary, middle, and high schools. The Chromebooks are stored in rolling carts that each hold 30 devices and keep them charged. Teachers will be able to reserve and check out the mobile devices.

Students and teachers will use the Chromebooks for collaborative learning projects, and students in third through eighth and eleventh grades will use them to take new state-mandated tests, which are only administered online beginning in the 2014-15 school year. These tests include the new Smarter Balanced Assessments.

Training is available for teachers who use the devices in their classrooms. One teacher at every school is part of a professional development group called The Academy. Academy members have advanced technology skills and receive additional compensation to train their fellow teachers on how to effectively use technology in the classroom.

At Amboy Middle School, Academy member Melissa Theis teaches English and language arts to seventh graders. Besides using Chromebooks in her classroom for poetry and other projects, students use them to learn the how-tos of having an email account. Theis also uses Google Apps for Education to grade her students' writing papers.

She can add comments, how-to videos, or her own voice to a student's document to help them before the rewriting process, enabling them to get a better grade on the final assignment. "My students are learning more than just basic computer skills, they are learning to feel comfortable with technology," Theis said.

Read the rest of this story and many others at www.ourkidswa.com.



WSSDA Direct is published monthly by the Washington State School Directors' Association to provide information of interest to school directors and the education community. The views expressed in opinion articles appearing in WSSDA Direct are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent WSSDA policies or positions. If you have a disability and need this publication in an alternate format, please contact the WSSDA Communications Department.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October

- 1** Regional Meeting
Colfax
- 2** Regional Meeting
Kennewick
- 7** Resolutions Committee
Meeting
- 8** Regional Meeting
Woodland
- 11** Regional Meeting
Quillayute Valley
- 15** Regional Meeting
Aberdeen
- 16** Regional Meeting
Fife
- 24** COSA Fall Workshop
- 25** Legislative Committee
Meeting
- 29** Regional Meeting
Arlington

November

- 6** Regional Meeting
Mead
- 19** Board of Directors Meeting
- 19** Interscholastic Activities
Committee Meeting
- 19** Resolutions
Committee Meeting
- 19-22** Annual Conference
- 22** Board of Directors Meeting
- 22** Trust Lands Committee
Meeting

December

- 17** Webinar

