



## Legislature OKs major education bills

### Lawmakers approve new K-12 accountability system, beginnings of 'prototypical' school funding model

Washington's Legislature was unable to finish its business within the 60 days allotted by the constitution, but lawmakers did manage to push through a series of major education revisions in the 11th hour.

The regular 60-day session ended March 11 without agreement on a supplemental state operating budget and a tax package to close a \$2.8 billion dollar gap between current spending levels and projected state revenues. As this issue of *WSSDA Direct* went to press, the House and Senate were meeting in a special session to search for a compromise.

The closing days of the regular session did, however, bring consensus and approval of several major bills related to K-12 education.

Among the most significant was SB 6696, a measure designed to enhance the state's forthcoming application for federal money under the Obama administration's "Race to the Top" competitive grant program. Washington chose to opt out of the first round of applications earlier this year, deciding to wait for approval of changes that would better align the state with RTTT requirements.

Those changes include the establishment of a new teacher and principal evaluation model that includes the use of student growth data, provisional adoption of national common core academic standards, extension of the new teacher provisional period from two to three years, and expansion of alternative route preparation programs for teachers and principals.

Perhaps the most significant element of SB 6696 for school boards is a new K-12 accountability system in which



State Representatives working from the House floor during the closing days of the 2010 regular session.

the state—for the first time—will have the power to intervene in districts with low-performing schools.

The plan, developed by the State Board of Education, will establish a new state "accountability index" to identify both high- and low-performing schools. Districts with schools performing in the bottom five percent of Title I schools will be required to undergo an academic audit and submit a plan to the state identifying the model and steps that will be used to turn around the school. (Required action will be contingent on the availability of federal funds).

Turnaround strategies could include more latitude in hiring, rewarding or replacing teachers and principals based on student performance, better use of achievement data, more flexibility to restructure the school day, and use of

*(continued on page 2)*

# The value of WSSDA membership

Harry Frost, WSSDA Interim Executive Director



In these days of limited resources and escalating expectations, school district leaders are justifiably focused on value for money—counting every dollar and making every dollar count. The goal for everyone is to ensure that resources are invested wisely.

I firmly believe one such investment is your membership in the Washington State School Directors' Association.

While WSSDA offers fee-based programs, the core of your association's value lies in our dues-supported services—services that would be costly or cost-prohibitive for districts to acquire individually. The benefits associated with WSSDA membership are even more important during difficult fiscal times like these. They include:

**Advocacy** School directors consistently identify advocacy as their top priority for WSSDA. And we deliver with an effective governmental relations effort that works at the state and federal levels as the only organization representing the school board/governance perspective in improving and promoting public education. Our staff is “on the hill” in Olympia every day the Legislature is in session and works throughout the year with state policymakers, advocating on issues that matter to our members. We also support a strong network of school directors who communicate with members of Congress and federal policymakers on matters affecting K-12 education.

**Policy support** As set forth in state law, WSSDA is the only organization in Washington chartered to coordinate and facilitate the development of school district policy. WSSDA provides expert support and guidance to assist school boards with policy questions, and is frequently asked by the Legislature to craft model policies for local districts (most recently on online learning, concussion management and cyberbullying).

**Leadership development** WSSDA offers myriad resources to help school directors strengthen their leadership skills and work as a team. New school board standards, developed by a WSSDA task force, help our members govern through researched best practices that are proven to promote high levels of district and student performance. School directors rely on WSSDA to learn more about their roles and responsibilities, board/superintendent relations, conflict resolution, data-driven decision-making, closing the achievement gap, and many other topics.

**Information** WSSDA delivers information services that help members stay on top of education issues around the state and the country, including our popular E-Clippings service and our daily legislative updates. We now offer Webinars on timely topics and have added online video reports and presentations. As always, we provide a range of printed and online publications on topics ranging from school board advocacy to open public meetings requirements to parliamentary procedure.

**Member expertise** One of WSSDA's greatest strengths is the expertise of the membership itself, particularly as school directors develop and share innovative approaches to challenges in K-12 education. WSSDA leverages this expertise in a number of ways, including our committees and task forces, and our Regional Meetings (which are offered for just the cost of the meal).

The bottom line is that we deeply value your membership in WSSDA and continually strive to give you the best value for your participation. If you'd like to know more about our programs and services, please don't hesitate to contact me or any member of the WSSDA staff. We are here to serve you.

## Legislature *(continued from cover)*

research-based instruction. A central element of the new system requires districts to reopen their collective bargaining agreements (or negotiate an addendum) if any changes are needed to implement the required action plan.

On another front, lawmakers approved HB 2776 to begin moving toward implementation of a new “prototypical school” funding model envisioned in the basic education finance reform act approved last year. Based on the recommendations of the Funding Formula Technical Working Group and the Quality Education Council, the bill calls for implementation of new formulas for class size reduction, pupil transportation and “MSOC” (maintenance, supplies and operating costs) starting in the next biennium.

The other piece of major K-12 legislation approved this year (HB 2893) deals with school district local levies. The measure provides a four percent increase in the local levy lid for all school districts in the state, and allows districts to request a supplemental levy before the current levy has expired. The levy lid lift is coupled with an increase in levy equalization (Local Effort Assistance) funding, going from the current 12 percent rate to 14 percent.

Stay tuned to WSSDA's daily legislative updates (sent by email and posted on [wssda.org](http://wssda.org)) and our weekly video reports (at [www.youtube.com/wssda](http://www.youtube.com/wssda)) for the outcome of budget negotiations. WSSDA is also planning a post-session Webinar to summarize legislative action on K-12 issues, as well as its annual printed legislative summary.

In the meantime, contact WSSDA Governmental Relations Director Dan Steele (360.252.3010, [d.steele@wssda.org](mailto:d.steele@wssda.org)) if you have questions.

# April meetings focus on state's Race to the Top application

School directors are invited and encouraged to attend meetings being held this month to firm up Washington state's forthcoming application for federal Race to the Top competitive grants.

Two meetings will be held and will also be available as a videoconference through the state's K-20 network. The first session will originate from the Puget Sound Educational Service District in Renton starting at 6:00 p.m. on April 8. The second session, with the same agenda and also starting at 6:00 p.m., will be held on April 12, originating from Educational Service District 101 in Spokane.

The meetings are being held to review a proposed Memorandum of Understanding, which, when locally approved, will allow individual districts to join Washington state in the RTTT

## RTTT meetings via video conference:

Thursday, April 8, 6:00 p.m.  
Originating from: Puget Sound ESD, Renton

Monday, April 12, 6:00 p.m.  
Originating from: ESD 101, Spokane

submission. The application is being coordinated by a committee headed by Judy Hartmann of the Office of the Governor, Edie Harding of the State Board of Education, and Alan Burke of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The steering committee notes that the MOU forms the core of the

application by laying out what districts will need to do, and what resources likely would be available if they join the state team and the grant is approved by the federal Department of Education.

The meetings are intended to explain the purpose and composition of the MOU, to discuss procedures for securing district approval, and to review plans for additional outreach activities regarding the grant. Presenters will review the Education Department's procedures for considering state RTTT grants, and, should the state receive a grant, outline what districts will need to accomplish in order to finalize grant requirements and qualify for funding.

If your district is interested in participating as one of the videoconference sites, please send an e-mail to [vscheduler@k12.wa.us](mailto:vscheduler@k12.wa.us) by April 7.

## ACROSS THE BOARD



Brown

Cammy Brown (Chimacum) was among a class of PEAK Leaders 2009-10, recently commended by the House of Representatives and the state of Washington. The PEAK Leadership Program is a 10-month adult community leadership program serving Clallam and Jefferson Counties on the North

Olympic Peninsula. Program work for 2009-2010 focused on community development, health care, education, environment and state and local government, and through these issues of public concern, the participants have demonstrated a commitment to involvement in solving community problems.

The PEAK Leadership Program invests in the leadership capacity of the region by developing leaders who are: Purposeful, Effective, Authentic, and the Keystone of quality leaders.

Brown is a member of the WSSDA Task Force on Small Schools Issues



Williams

Bill Williams (North Thurston) was featured in *The Washington Society of Association Executives' Jan./Feb. 2010 issue of The Washington Executive*. The article, *Profiles in Association Management*, through a question and answer format, focused on his current position as Executive

Director of the Washington State PTA. In response to the question, "What's an interesting or unusual fact that most of your fellow WSAE colleagues probably don't know about you?" Williams, an attorney, replied, "I argued two cases in the United States Supreme Court—clearly the highlights of my legal career. Another fact not in my bio is that I have appeared on the Broadway stage."

Williams is a past president of WSSDA (2001). From 2003 to 2007 he represented nine western states on the NSBA Board of Directors.

## Membership survey coming soon

The WSSDA Board of Directors will be working in the coming months to update the association's strategic plan for the next three years. A vital component of the planning process is WSSDA's triennial membership survey, which will help the board identify member needs and issues as well as satisfaction with current programs and services. The survey will be conducted by telephone using a statistically valid sample of approximately 300 school board members from around the state.

If you are selected to take part in the survey, please consider lending about 15 minutes of your time to the interviewer. Your input will be greatly appreciated as the board shapes the association's vision, mission and direction.

## Legislative proposals requested

Each year, WSSDA's Legislative Committee requests legislative proposals from school boards in order to develop its annual legislative package. These proposals, together with ongoing permanent positions, are annually prioritized so that legislators and WSSDA staff are clear on the association's most important legislative issues. Your participation in this process strengthens the association, and therefore, its influence with legislators.

Instructions for submitting legislative proposals can be found at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) under Legislative Information. Please check WSSDA's permanent positions ([wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > WSSDA Information > Bylaws and Positions) to avoid duplication as you formulate your proposals.

Proposals must be received by WSSDA no later than Friday, May 28, 2010.

## Arts education: Resources for school boards

May is Arts Education Month in Washington state, a time to focus increased attention on the importance of the arts as an essential component of a complete education for all students. The observance is led by the nonprofit group ArtsEd Washington in partnership with the Washington State Arts Commission and the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

As part of Arts Education Month, ArtsEd Washington has assembled a series of resources for school districts and school board members outlining the requirements for arts education and documenting the important role arts programs can play in areas such as closing the achievement gap and providing extended learning opportunities for students. These resources are available on the organization's Web site at [www.ArtsEdWashington.org](http://www.ArtsEdWashington.org) or by calling 206.441.4501.

## NEWS BRIEFS

**The ESD 113 Board of Directors endorsed the Washington School Board Standards developed last year by WSSDA's Board Standards Task Force.** Two sets of voluntary standards—addressing school boards and individual school directors—were developed and disseminated to school boards across the state for their consideration. The ESD 113 board encouraged all local school boards to study the standards and adopt them for use by the board and individual members. Dr. Bill Keim, ESD 113 Superintendent, served on WSSDA's Board Standards Task Force. The Washington School Board Standards can be found online at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Leadership Development.

**The Washington Association of School Administrators and PEMCO Insurance recognized Doug Curtis, principal of LaCrosse Schools in the LaCrosse School District, and Steve Holland, superintendent of the Raymond School District, as recipients of the 2010 Robert J. Handy Most Effective Administrator Awards.** The awards were presented at the WASA Small Schools Conference in Yakima last month. A third administrator for the large district category will be

named in May at WASA's Superintendent Workshop in Chelan. A \$10,000 award is divided equally among the three winners, and can be used for personal or professional growth and/or to support a successful school or district program.

**The State Board of Education has announced its 2010 Student Video Contest.** This year's competition focuses on the important role of the arts in schools. The due date for entries is May 3, 2010. It is an opportunity for middle and high school students to showcase their love of the arts, creativity, and video skills. More information about the contest is available at [www.sbe.wa.gov](http://www.sbe.wa.gov).

**The American School Board Journal has announced the Magna Awards for 2010.** Though no Washington schools were awarded this year, the programs of award winning school boards nationwide are catalogued in a searchable database of best practices on the ASBJ Web site: [asbj.com/magnasearch.aspx](http://asbj.com/magnasearch.aspx). Search results feature full descriptions of each program chosen as a Magna Award winner in past years.

## Financial affairs report due to PDC

The Personal Financial Affairs Statement (PDC Form F-1) for calendar year 2009 is due on or before April 15, 2010. Any school director who was in office for all or part of 2009 in a school district with 1,000 or more registered voters must file.

The F-1 can be filed electronically, by mail or by personal delivery. For blank forms and instructions, visit [www.pdc.wa.gov/filers/appointed/default.aspx](http://www.pdc.wa.gov/filers/appointed/default.aspx). For more information, contact the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission at 360.753.1111 or (toll-free) 877.601.2828, or e-mail them at [pdc@pdc.wa.gov](mailto:pdc@pdc.wa.gov).

## Michelle Obama to address NSBA's 2010 Annual Conference



First Lady Michelle Obama will address the Saturday General Session of the NSBA Annual Conference via a special video message. Her talk will focus on the "Let's Move" initiative and the important role school board members will play in its implementation. Other General Session speakers include Emmy-winning broadcast journal-

ist Charlie Rose, Grammy-winning jazz musician and arts education advocate Wynton Marsalis, and Apple co-founder and renowned philanthropist Steve Wozniak. Herman Boone, football coach and motivator, is Sunday's fellowship speaker.

The conference, to be held April 10-12 in Chicago, is designed to benefit both veteran and new board members, as well as superintendents and board support professionals.

Registration, and details on sessions, workshops and events can be found online; visit [nsba.org/conference](http://nsba.org/conference). An online planner enables you to search workshops, sessions, and events by name, subject area, and date/time to create your own individualized schedule. NSBA's Annual Conference is open to all school boards who are members of their state school boards association.

WSSDA president Kevin Laverty will join other state associations of the Pacific Region, to host a reception at the conference on Sunday, April 11, 5:00 to 6:30 p.m. in the Chicago Hilton Grand Ballroom.

## \$75K grant provides training on free resources

Washington has received a \$75,000 grant from the Verizon Foundation to raise teachers' awareness of its free education resources and to train teachers in their use.

Verizon Thinkfinity ([www.thinkfinity.org](http://www.thinkfinity.org)) contains thousands of resources, including K-12 lesson plans, interactive games, in-class activities and videos that can be searched by grade level, keyword or subject. These resources are aligned to state and national standards and offer K-12 materials across eight academic disciplines, from science to English to mathematics.

The grant will help provide professional development opportunities to district trainers and classroom teachers through on-site and online training.

Content for Verizon Thinkfinity is provided through a partnership between the Verizon Foundation and 11 organizations in the fields of education and literacy: the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Council for Economic Education, International Reading Association, John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, National Center for Family Literacy, National Endowment for the Humanities, National Council of Teachers of English, National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, National Geographic Society, ProLiteracy and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History. The Verizon Foundation supports the advancement of literacy and K-12 education, and fosters awareness and prevention of domestic violence.

## Qwest awards announced

Nine winners of this year's Qwest Teachers and Technology grants will each receive \$10,000 for learning projects that integrate digital technologies. The grants fund classroom projects ranging from designing a school building to educating the community on ecosystems at risk in the Hood Canal to exhibiting a museum-quality photo gallery of Seattle's Central District.

Qwest Foundation grants help teachers create 21st century learning environments that use technologies to solve real-world problems. Winning schools are Cheney Middle School (Cheney), Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School (Yakima), Kelso High School (Kelso), Pioneer Primary School (Pioneer), Stevens Elementary School (Aberdeen), Eckstein Middle School (Seattle), Garfield High School (Seattle), Kulshan Middle School (Bellingham), and Moses Lake High School (Moses Lake).

## Reading and math gender gaps explored

A new study from the Washington D.C.-based Center on Education Policy (CEP) that analyzes state assessment data by gender finds good news for girls but troubling news for boys. According to CEP's study, the lagging performance by boys in reading is the most pressing gender-gap issue facing our schools. In some states, the percentage of boys performing at the proficient level in reading is more than 10 percentage points below that of girls. And that trend is consistent at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, the study finds.

The story is different in math, however. At the proficient level, the number of states in which girls outperformed boys was roughly equal to the number of states in which boys outperformed girls. At the advanced level, 4th-grade boys outperformed girls in most states.

The full national report as well as individual state profiles of achievement trends for males and females are available on CEP's Web site, [www.cep-dc.org](http://www.cep-dc.org).

The Center on Education Policy is a national, independent advocate for public education and for more effective public schools.

## Washington Achievement Awards go to 174 schools

The Washington Achievement Awards were announced by the State Board of Education and OSPI last month. This year, 70 elementary, 26 middle, 52 high schools and 26 comprehensive schools received awards. Under the program, all schools are indexed according to outcomes from 2007 to 2009. A set of outcomes and indicators resulting in 20 measures comprises the overall index.

"The index will be instrumental in helping schools and districts craft data-driven school improvement plans," said Edie Harding, State Board executive director. It will also aid in tracking schools' progress going forward and identifying where they may need additional help, she explained.

Schools are recognized for being top performers in six categories: overall excellence, language arts, math, science, extended graduation rate (awarded to high and comprehensive schools), and gifted education. In future years, awards will recognize schools for closing the achievement gap as well.

For a complete list of award-winning schools visit [www.k12.wa.us/EducationAwards](http://www.k12.wa.us/EducationAwards).

## Leadership WSSDA 2010: a year of study and growth

Leadership WSSDA's 2010 class began its year-long intensive program in boardmanship last month at the association's Olympia conference center. This year's participants are:

- Rob Coffey (Mount Vernon)
- Danny Edwards (Riverview)
- Nita Haag (Grand Coulee Dam)
- Mike Harris (East Valley, Spokane)
- Frank Kline (Methow Valley)
- Jean Lacy (White River)
- Lori Oviatt (Riverview)
- Jay Rosapepe (South Kitsap)
- Jeff Thorp (Mukilteo)
- Roger Trainor (East Valley, Spokane)
- Jeff Vigue (Ridgefield)

Designed to develop proactive, visionary leaders, Leadership WSSDA offers committed school directors from across the state the opportunity to work closely together, sharing ideas and experiences throughout a year-long course. The program is comprised of weekend sessions in March, May, August, and October, with a concluding session and graduation at November's Annual Conference in Spokane.



# Regional Meetings continue

WSSDA's 2010 Spring Regional Meetings continue throughout April in locations around the state, and agendas are posted at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Conferences and Meetings > Regional Meetings. Topics include WSSDA and SBE updates, legislative outcomes, as well as a



list of round-table discussion topics. Bring your questions and concerns or send topic ideas in advance to your WSSDA Board of Directors representative. (Contact information is found at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) under "WSSDA Information.")

Weekday meetings, including dinner, are held from 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. Saturday meetings, including lunch, are scheduled from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Registration is required, and the only charge is for your meal. Fall Regional Meeting dates are posted at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) as well.

## Spring Regional Meetings

Granite Falls	Thursday, April 8
Pasco	Monday, April 19
Sunnyside	Tuesday, April 20
Ellensburg	Wednesday, April 21
Cashmere	Monday, April 26
Colfax	Tuesday, April 27

## WSSDA 2009 Annual Report published online



As part of WSSDA's endeavor to use technology to conserve resources, the Annual Report is being published on the Web this year. The design features a unique driftwood alphabet by Shaw Island students, photographed by School Director Alison Hart Lengyel. Included are articles by WSSDA's 2009 president, Martha Rice, and Interim Executive Director, Harry Frost.

Along with a review of the year's activities and successes, the report outlines WSSDA's financial picture. Visit [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Spotlight/Popular Links. If you need the report in an alternate format, please contact Kate Vikstrom ([K.Vikstrom@wssda.org](mailto:K.Vikstrom@wssda.org), 360.252.3015).

## Resources for creating an online learning policy

WSSDA's recent Webinar "Creating an Online Learning Policy" is available as on-demand video on our Web site. This 50-minute presentation from WSSDA's Marilee Scarbrough and OSPI's Judy Margrath-Huge provides succinct information to help your board develop an online learning policy by the Aug. 1 deadline.

Both the Webinar and the sample policy and procedure are available at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Policy and Legal > Policy Services.

OSPI's Digital Learning Department is offering a series of online trainings on this topic as well. Visit [www.digitalllearning.k12.wa.us/support](http://www.digitalllearning.k12.wa.us/support) for more information.

## WELCOME, NEW SCHOOL DIRECTORS!

### Congratulations and welcome to the following new school directors:

David Macdonald, *Hockinson*  
Karen DeBruler, *Kent*  
Tanya Keel, *McCleary*  
LaDonna Mattson, *Pateros*  
Grace Larsen, *Pateros*  
Sam Andrews, *West Valley*

### Thanks and best wishes to those who have recently left board service:

Erik Mattson, *Hockinson*  
Lauren Stephens, *Lopez Island*  
Jerry Evans, *Pateros*  
Patti Luchte, *Pateros*  
Debbie Hjortedal, *West Valley*

## Follow us on Twitter and Facebook

WSSDA's "tweets" are brief updates on education news and association activities. Visit [twitter.com/wssda](http://twitter.com/wssda). Find us at [Facebook.com/wssda](http://Facebook.com/wssda) and click on "Become a fan." (Sign up to be a Facebook member at [Facebook.com](http://Facebook.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.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES

- WSSDA Executive Director Search Committee SeaTac April 5
Regional Meeting, Granite Falls April 8
RTTT review meeting (see page 3) originating from PSESD 121, Renton April 8
Council of School Attorneys (COSA) Annual School Law Seminar, Chicago, April 8-10
NSBA 70th Annual Conference, Chicago April 10-12
RTTT review meeting (see page 3) originating from NEWESD 101, Spokane April 12
Regional Meeting, Pasco April 19
Regional Meeting, Sunnyside April 20
Regional Meeting, Ellensburg April 21
COSA Spring Workshop, SeaTac April 23
WSSDA Board of Directors, Seattle April 23-24
Regional Meeting, Cashmere April 26
Regional Meeting, Colfax April 27
For event details, visit wssda.org, "Calendar of Events."

- NSBA TECHNOLOGY SITE VISITS
Wilmette, Illinois: April 7-9
Golden, Colorado: May 5-7
NSBA 70th ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND EXPOSITION
Chicago, Illinois: April 10-12
WSSDA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Vancouver, Washington: Sept. 24-25
NSBA T+L
Phoenix, Arizona: Oct. 19-21
WSSDA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Spokane: Nov. 18-20