



# Direct

Washington State School Directors' Association

June 2010

## WSSDA selects new executive director

WSSDA Board of Directors identifies Dr. Jonelle Adams for executive position

A comprehensive executive search process has resulted in the selection of Dr. Jonelle Adams of Bellevue for the position of WSSDA Executive Director.

After a full day of interviews and deliberations at a special meeting May 22, the WSSDA Board of Directors voted to offer the position to Adams and authorized WSSDA President Kevin Laverty to enter into contract negotiations. As this issue of *WSSDA Direct* went to press, the offer had been accepted and discussions were underway on terms and conditions of the contract. Adams is tentatively scheduled to begin the position in mid-July.

Adams has served as Executive Director of the Washington Alliance for Better Schools since 1998. In this position she has been responsible for leading and managing a non-profit consortium of 12 member school districts from Marysville to Federal Way to support school reform and professional development for principals and teachers. Adams' previous experience includes 12 years of organizational and educational leadership and management positions with the Boeing Company where she was responsible for supporting school reform through effective business partnerships and providing leadership training and effective team building skills to more than 150 school principals. She also served as an elementary school teacher and a staff development instructor in the Kent School District from 1972-1984.

"We believe Jonelle will be a great leader for our association," said Laverty. "She has an extensive background in both public education and the private sector, and is clearly



Dr. Jonelle Adams answers questions during her May 22 interview with the WSSDA Board of Directors.

dedicated to promoting success for Washington's school children."

Laverty also expressed appreciation to the WSSDA Executive Director Search Committee, led by WSSDA Immediate Past President Martha Rice and assisted by the search consultant, Hagel and Company. The committee has been working since the beginning of the year to recruit and recommend candidates for the executive director position.

"From the beginning, the committee has been thorough and strategic in its work," he said. "We appreciate the work of the committee as well as the input of school directors and the education community during the selection process."

For more information, see the Executive Director Search section on the WSSDA website ([wssda.org](http://wssda.org)) under "Spotlight/Popular Links."

INSIDE  
THIS ISSUE

State enters RTTT

Register now for  
Legislative Assembly

JLARC issues preliminary  
report

# Leaving the comfort zone

Kevin Laverty, WSSDA President



Dear Fellow School Directors:

It's been six months since I found my way to the leadership of WSSDA. And I've found along the way that change has been the constant.

I'm pleased to say, thanks to the work of the executive director search committee chaired by immediate past president Martha Rice, the board

has found a highly qualified individual to serve as our next executive director—Dr. Jonelle Adams. You can read more about her background elsewhere here in *WSSDA Direct*, but let me say it is rare to find someone who has been a teacher, a corporate training director, a corporate education funder and an executive director of an organization that has literally brought millions of dollars in grants to impact student learning in multiple school districts. She will challenge us all to be at the top of our game!

We're also losing an anchor in the person of Dan Steele, our assistant executive director for governmental affairs. Dan has kept us in the game and out of hot water with the Legislature on many occasions over the years. I hope you'll join me in wishing him well as he moves on to his new role at our sister organization—WASA. We are already in the process of searching for his replacement to help keep our eye on the legislative prize, as it were, and look forward to our continued relationship with Dan.

In another arena, over the past two years, the board has been looking at ways to improve online capabilities for our membership. At our May meeting, it approved a plan to move ahead with a revamped website and improved interactive capabilities that will become our primary portal for member services going forward. We expect to have a prototype available for you to check out in action at the annual conference in November. You won't be disappointed.

Finally, as educational reform legislation passed both houses of the Legislature to prepare our state for its Race to the Top application and secure \$250 million in federal funds, our membership heavily debated the value of this proposition. Many school districts chose to sign on, others did not. There's no shame in either position—as long as we fully debated the value of RTTT to our districts and students.

WSSDA is changing and we are leaving our comfort zone. It's a journey worth taking.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Laverty".

# State proceeding with 'Race' application

Washington state is proceeding with an application to compete for up to \$250 million in federal stimulus funds for K-12 education reform.

By the end of May, at least 265 of the state's 295 school districts had submitted partnership agreements to join in the state's forthcoming application for federal "Race to the Top" funds.

"This strength of support both in depth and breadth is a testament to the hard work that has been achieved to bring stakeholders together," said Gov. Chris Gregoire. "Their effort shows the continuing commitment to improve our schools across the entire state.

"During the next few weeks, we will be working to complete our application, which is now stronger because of this local support. Our application will articulate an education reform plan that is right for our state, and one that will actually be implemented in our classrooms."

Washington is submitting its application in the second round of the RTTT competition. Forty states and the District of Columbia entered the first round, but only two—Delaware and Tennessee—were selected.

Approximately \$3.4 billion remains for states competing in the second round, of which Washington would be eligible for an estimated award of up to \$250 million. Of that amount, half would be distributed to participating school districts based on federal Title I formula allocations. The application is being configured to ensure participating districts would receive at least \$88 per student over the four-year run of the grant.

For more information, visit the state's Race to the Top website at [www.waracothetop.org](http://www.waracothetop.org).

## Board OKs rebuild of WSSDA website

The majority of the May 22 special meeting of the WSSDA Board of Directors was devoted to interviewing candidates and making a selection for the association's executive director position (see front page article). The board also addressed a couple of business items during the meeting, including:

- The Board gave the go-ahead for a complete overhaul of the WSSDA website. The redesign, which was strongly recommended by the WSSDA Technology Advisory Group, will focus on creating a content-rich website that provides information and resources based on member input and WSSDA goals/objectives. Other objectives include creating a site that raises the WSSDA's profile in the education community, allows members to customize their WSSDA information/services, and provides a platform that supports workflow efficiency and the development of revenue-generating applications.

WSSDA will work with the state Department of Information Services to develop the new website. The timeline calls for a prototype site to be available for membership review at the WSSDA Annual Conference in November.

- The Board agreed to support a proposal to the National School Boards Association regarding the election of regional representatives to the NSBA Board of Directors. Under current procedures, two of the three directors from each region are chosen by school board members in that region; the third is selected by the NSBA Delegate Assembly. The proposed change would have all three directors elected by school board members in their respective regions.

The next regular meeting of the WSSDA Board of Directors will take place June 25-26 at the WSSDA Conference Center in Olympia.

## Results of draft study focus on district size/cost issues

While many of Washington's small school districts spend significantly more per pupil than the statewide average, those districts account for only a small amount of total school district expenditures in the state. And, not all small districts have high expenditures per pupil.

Those are key findings in a preliminary report recently published by the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee, a bipartisan agency that conducts performance audits, program evaluations, sunset reviews, and other analyses for the State Legislature.

The study, requested by the Legislature in 2009, is intended to review the relationship between school district size and enrollment costs. The review is associated with recent debates over proposals to force consolidation of some school districts.

Draft results of the study, issued in May, concluded that the highest expenditures per FTE pupil are found in small school districts, although districts vary greatly in how much their spending exceeds the statewide average. And, districts identified as spending well above the average account for only 2.5 percent of total 2007-08 school district expenditures in Washington.

The report also noted that higher expenditures are driven by state funding formulas to ensure small schools have adequate teaching staff.

In providing comments on the preliminary findings, WSSDA urged the authors to provide more context around the

unique financial circumstances of small school districts. The association also emphasized that the consequences of forced consolidations would negate the minimal financial benefits.

"As consolidation is raised as a possible solution to capture these minimal savings, we argue the added cost of transportation and the additional administrative costs of accomplishing those efforts would likely consume most of the savings," said WSSDA President Kevin Laverty. "The disruption and confusion within communities and the potential negative impacts on students and student achievement would far outweigh the limited possible cost savings."

The draft report steers clear of identifying an "optimal" size for school districts, saying the research is inconclusive. It does, however, describe a number of nonfinancial benefits of small schools/districts, including higher graduation rates, comparable college performance, additional opportunities for student activities, greater teacher collaboration and increased parental involvement.

In its concluding comments, WSSDA again reminded state policymakers that decisions about district consolidation should be made locally and not mandated from Olympia—and that those decisions should be based on the best interests of the affected students and not judged on finances alone.

JLARC is scheduled to finalize the report at its June 16 meeting in Olympia. The full report can be found on the Legislature's website at [www.leg.wa.gov/JLARC](http://www.leg.wa.gov/JLARC).



## WSSDA 2010 Legislative Assembly

September 24 - 25  
Hilton Hotel,  
Vancouver, Washington

Watch your mail for the registration brochure or register online at [wssda.org/assembly](http://wssda.org/assembly).

### Registration opens for fall Legislative Assembly

Plan to attend the fall Legislative Assembly to help set WSSDA's advocacy agenda. Several key areas will be explored, including:

- **Basic Education funding** – The 2009 Legislature enacted an ambitious commitment to K-12 finance reform. With expected limited revenues, what are school directors' funding priorities? What will be the sources of revenue?

- **Local control** – The long-held tradition honoring local control of schools is challenged by the potential implementation of Core 24 requirements, the adoption of national common core standards, and the intensifying conversations about forced consolidation.

- **Unfunded mandates** – After years of school directors pushing, little relief from unfunded mandates has been provided. As budgets get tighter, the reduction of these mandates becomes even more important.

Help set the agenda for 2011 by indicating your legislative priority issues.

## The Changing Face of School Finance

*WSSDA workshop offered  
August 12*

Washington school finance is taking on a new face. With implementation of the Prototypical School Model in the next biennial budget, the new language and structure of school finance is expected to make funding less mysterious, school board choices more transparent and outcomes more accountable to the public.

On August 12, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. in Olympia, WSSDA and OSPI will team up to provide an information-packed workshop that outlines the current school budget process, explains the new accountability structure, and helps you frame your own community discussion. Explore ways to engage your stakeholders in the new process. Online registration materials will soon be available at [wssda.org/workshops](http://wssda.org/workshops).

## NEWS BRIEFS

**A total of 106 high school artists were celebrated for their individual creativity and vision last month at a reception for 37th Annual Superintendent's High School Art Show, held at OSPI's building in Olympia.** This year's theme was "Artworks Extraordinary." Of the 106 regional winners, 11 were selected as state winners. Regional winners, their families and teachers were present at the reception.

Visit [www.k12.wa.us/Arts/ArtShow/default.aspx](http://www.k12.wa.us/Arts/ArtShow/default.aspx) for links to this year's winners, all entries sorted by ESD, and the art competition calendar for the upcoming 2010-11 school year.

**The American Institute of Architects Washington Council presented its annual Civic Design Awards last month—the only architectural competition in Washington state focusing solely on public buildings.** Of the 14 architects and projects honored, six went to K-12 facilities.

Three levels of award winners are named, Citation, Merit, and Honor. Citations, going to projects demonstrating quality and sensitivity in integrated designs, were awarded to Eastgate Elementary School (Bellevue) and Greenbridge Early Learning Center (Puget Sound ESD).

Merit awards, for designs exemplifying civic architecture with beauty and function, were presented to Garfield High School Historic Renovation (Seattle), Yakima Valley Technical Skills Center Phase I (Yakima), and The Cathcart Site (Snohomish). The most elite award level, the Honor Award, for projects embodying design excellence and creative risktaking, was won by Muckleshoot K-12 School (Muckleshoot Indian Tribe Planning Department). For photos and a listing of architects, visit [www.aiawa.org/CDA\\_2010\\_WinnerList.pdf](http://www.aiawa.org/CDA_2010_WinnerList.pdf)



## T+L: Innovation ~ out of the box

T+L, the National School Boards Association's technology and learning conference, will be held October 19-21, 2010 in Phoenix, Arizona, and registration is open now.

A full array of programming will help each member of the technology team—technology director, superintendent, school directors, principals, library media specialists, curriculum directors, teachers, and staff trainers—become more effective leaders.

T+L focuses on change, and the tools and programs that will enable change in the areas of digital content, education technology, policy and advocacy, global perspectives, creating learning environments, professional development communities, and S.T.E.M. Visit [nsba.org/tl](http://nsba.org/tl) for information and registration.

### Receive free E-Clippings

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The Washington state delegation attended the Pacific Region Reception at the 2010 National School Boards Association Annual Conference in Chicago. Many thanks to D.A. Davidson & Company for supporting WSSDA attendees through a sponsorship of this event.

## Quality Education Council resumes work

The Quality Education Council, established by the 2009 state Legislature, resumed work last month developing recommendations for implementing a new definition of basic education and for the financing necessary to support it. The new system will be in place by 2018. Randy Dorn, state superintendent of public instruction, chairs the QEC.

This year's Legislature passed SHB 2776, authorizing the phase-in of a new pupil transportation formula, as well as the phase-in of enhancements to current funding levels. SHB 2776 gave specific targets for school staffing levels of teachers, librarians and counselors, and others at each level.

Work in 2010 will focus on:

- Pupil transportation. The QEC will work toward implementing the new funding system for pupil

transportation by the next biennium. Providing a way for all students to get to and from school would be an obligation paid for by the state.

- Achievement gap and dropout rate. The QEC will gain a new member appointed by the Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee and will consult with both that committee and the Building Bridges workgroup to develop a legislative recommendation addressing the needs of struggling students.
- Basic operating costs. The QEC will work toward the necessary funding schools need to cover basic operating costs. Currently, the state provides only half the funding needed for insurance, lights, and heat.
- Stable and ample revenue sources. The QEC will deliver recommendations to the Legislature on how to

provide stable and ample revenue sources to fund basic education in the future. A workgroup dedicated to making recommendations on local levies and levy equalization will begin work this summer.

- Staffing levels. The QEC will take the lead in determining appropriate levels of classified school staff (such as security, technology support and maintenance and operations) and assure these levels are fully funded by 2018.
- Early learning. The QEC will collaborate with the Department of Early Learning to develop a comprehensive plan of early learning, continuing to implement state funded all-day kindergarten throughout the state.

The QEC submitted its first report to the Legislature in January and will update its recommendations every four years.

# Boards of Distinction

WSSDA's Boards of Distinction program invites your board/superintendent team to delve into the Washington School Board Standards, discussing and documenting how your board's actions align with effective governance practices.

The Boards of Distinction, piloted in 2009, has been simplified for a more refined focus, greater ease in application (less paperwork for school boards), and more equity for districts of all sizes—small, medium and large.

Each board which meets the criteria will receive recognition as a Board of Distinction. The board submitting the top rated application will be named WSSDA Board of the Year. Mailers describing the application process will be sent to each board president and superintendent. Visit [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Awards & Recognition for complete details and the application. Applications are due Sept. 27, 2010.

## Proposals sought for WSSDA positions

Each year school boards are invited to submit their ideas for WSSDA's permanent positions. Delineating WSSDA's beliefs, positions and values as viewed by its members, WSSDA positions are advisory to school boards as well as to other organizations and stakeholders. School directors will be mailed a WSSDA Resolution Proposal Form in June which must be submitted by Aug. 16; forms will also be posted online at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org). School directors are invited to submit positions to be considered for adoption by the Delegate Assembly during the Annual Conference in November. The call for submittals of permanent positions is coordinated by the WSSDA Resolutions Committee.

## Call for Annual Conference session proposals

Does your board/district have a successful program or promising practice to share with your colleagues at the WSSDA Annual Conference in November? We'd like to hear from you. We've posted our Call for Session Proposals on the WSSDA Annual Conference website [wssda.org/conference](http://wssda.org/conference) > For Presenters. Please take a look and consider submitting a proposal.

## WSSDA seeks officer candidates for 2011

School directors are asked to pay particular attention to the mailing *WSSDA seeks officer candidates for 2011*, explaining the procedure for becoming a candidate for WSSDA President-elect and Vice President.

For 2011, the position of President-elect is open to candidates from throughout the state. The position of Vice President is open to candidates from the east side of the Cascades. Both positions will be voted upon at the WSSDA Annual Conference in November.

Information may be submitted on paper using the forms in the packet, or electronically through the WSSDA website, [wssda.org](http://wssda.org). Candidate applications are due June 14.

If you have questions, please contact your Director Area representative on the WSSDA Nominating Committee; a roster is available on the WSSDA website under "WSSDA Information." Or, contact Martha Rice, Nominating Committee Chair, at 509.910.0708. In the WSSDA office, contact Terri Eixenberger, 360.252.3002.

## WELCOME, NEW SCHOOL DIRECTORS!

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

J. David Rubie, *Bremerton*  
Robert Torppa, *Naselle-Grays River Valley*  
Jill Schmierer, *Wilbur*

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

Judy Bushnell, *Bellevue*  
Suzie Deife, *Odessa*  
Carrie Crow, *Wilbur*

## Follow WSSDA on Twitter and Facebook

Sign up for a Twitter account and receive WSSDA's "tweets"—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." (You must be a Facebook member: Sign up to be a member at [Facebook.com](http://Facebook.com).)

# WSSDA PowerUp

## Annual Conference, your opportunity to connect

Register now for WSSDA's Annual Conference, Nov. 17-20, 2010, in Spokane.

### 2010 Keynote Speakers



**Dr. Joe Martin: Opening General Session**

Joe Martin is an award-winning speaker, author, professor, and retention expert. He's authored or co-authored seven books, including *Good Teachers Never Quit*; *Let Your Leadership Speak*; and *Tricks of the Grade*.

Martin has addressed more than 600 businesses, organizations, colleges and universities, and K-12 schools and districts. His clients include MetLife, the Central Intelligence Agency, the United States Navy, and the National Education Association. He also serves as a guest columnist for three national magazines.



**T. C. Roekle: Friday General Session Luncheon**

T. C. Roekle is a highly respected educator with solid leadership experience. Her focus is on innovative strategies to raise student and staff performance at the building and district

levels. She is recognized for successes as a classroom teacher, secondary and elementary principal, curriculum director, co-author, assistant superintendent, and graduate school instructor. Roekle has spearheaded major efforts in educational leadership, school improvement, standards implementation, technology integration and school reform.



**Dr. David Steinberg: Closing General Session**

As a seasoned educator, administrator, and college professor, David Steinberg has taught the lessons of leadership to thousands. He currently serves as director of the Administrative and Supervisory Professional Growth

System with Montgomery County Schools in Maryland and is a professor at Johns Hopkins University and Montgomery College. Also a musician, Steinberg's entertaining, engaging session will help you discover how lessons from great American music link to the best leadership research and practical strategies that ensure student success.

### Early Bird Sessions, Weds. Nov. 17



**Thomas L. Alsbury: School Boards Count! Here's How ...**

Beliefs, communication and decisions by school boards, coupled with district culture and climate, can influence successful teaching and improved learning. Explore the

research and a new concept called "Transrelational Leadership." Coined by the workshop presenter, the term evolved from his research on politically motivated board turnover, the influence on student achievement and how boards can avoid or diminish existing conflict. Attend as a team to assess the capacity of your district for sustaining innovative reforms.

**Seismic Change: What's Next?**

No Child Left Behind, ESEA, Race to the Top, Accountability, I-3 Grants, to name a few federal initiatives, continually challenge school board policy and decision makers. How do all of these mesh? Or do they? What do they mean for schools and school districts and what are the decision points for school boards? Regardless of whether Washington receives Race to the Top money, education will undergo major change. Get a handle on these issues and gain hands-on tools from experts to make the right decisions for your schools, districts and communities.

**New Board Orientation**

Newly elected and first term school directors will gain insight into their roles and responsibilities on the board, and within the district and the community. This fast-paced, high-energy workshop delivers board/superintendent relationship building techniques for a smooth transition onto the team. Discover resources for ongoing information and support and begin to develop a network of colleagues from around the state.

Online Conference and hotel registration:  
[wssda.org/conference](http://wssda.org/conference).

Save money by registering early. Check the online site for information on scholarships as well.



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**

**WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES**

- WSSDA Legislative Committee, Olympia . . . . . June 18-19
- WSSDA Board of Directors, Olympia . . . . . June 25-26
- WASA/AWSP Summer Conference, Spokane . . . . . June 27-29
- Independence Day Holiday . . . . . July 5
- Board of Natural Resources, Olympia, . . . . . July 6
- State Board of Education, La Conner . . . . . July 13-15
- NSBA Pacific Region Summer Meeting,  
Banff, Alberta, BC . . . . . July 16-18
- Professional Educators Standards Board,  
Gig Harbor . . . . . July 21-22
- WSSDA Legislative Committee, Olympia . . . . . July 23-24
- New Superintendent Workshop, Olympia . . . . . July 26-27
- WSSDA Board of Directors (tentative), TBD . . . . . July 31
- The Changing Face of School Finance Workshop  
Olympia . . . . . August 12
- Leadership WSSDA, Olympia . . . . . August 13-14
- WSSDA Board of Directors retreat, TBD . . . . . August 27-29

- WSSDA WORKSHOP: THE CHANGING FACE OF  
SCHOOL FINANCE  
Olympia: August 12
- WSSDA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
Vancouver, Washington: Sept. 24-25
- NSBA T+L  
Phoenix, Arizona: Oct. 19-21
- WSSDA ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
Spokane: Nov. 17-20

For event details, visit [wssda.org](http://wssda.org), "Calendar of Events."