



Direct

Washington State School Directors' Association September 2010

Ups and downs in latest state exams

Dorn attributes mixed test results to lack of funding, switchover to new test formats

Washington students posted mixed results on the state's new exams for reading, writing, math and science, an outcome the state's schools chief attributes to cuts in education funding and the changeover to new test formats.

At the end of August, state Superintendent of Public Instruction Randy Dorn released results from exams administered statewide last spring. The testing marked the debut of the new Measures of Student Progress (MSP) for grades 3-8 and the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) for grade 10. Both exams replaced the Washington Assessment of Student Learning.

This year also featured two other new developments—the use of new math standards in grades 3-8 and the start of online testing. About 25 percent of students in grades 6-8 took the reading and math portions of the MSP on a computer.

For the MSP, scores in reading increased in three grades (3, 7 and 8) and decreased in three (4 through 6) when compared to 2009. MSP writing scores increased in grades 4 and 7 and were mixed in science—down in fifth grade; up in eighth grade.

In math, the MSP saw increases in grades 4 and 6-8 and decreases in third and fifth grades. Officials cautioned, however, that those results are based on the new math standards, which effectively set a new baseline for results.

The 10th-grade HSPE saw slight decreases in math, reading and writing. Science, which becomes a graduation requirement for incoming 10th graders, saw an increase.



Dorn presents MSP and HSPE results at a late August news conference. Full results are found at www.k12.wa.us/.

Dorn said he expected mixed results with the introduction of new state tests and online testing. He noted, however, that the results also reflect two straight years of cuts to the K-12 education budget as many services, such as after-school and summer-school programs intended

to assist the most challenging students, have been cut or eliminated.

“Washington needs to recommit to education, and it’s not just me saying that, it’s the courts,” Dorn said. “We are facing a serious budget crisis in this state, but if we continue to cut education, the progress we’ve previously made will disappear.”

Results also measure how the state is doing to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), a federal mandate that requires all states to be on track to ensure students reach “100 percent proficiency” in reading and math by 2014.

In 2010, preliminary figures show that 968 schools did not make AYP, a decrease of 317 schools from 2009. State-wide, 1,129 schools are in one of five steps of improvement. For districts, 212 did not make AYP, an increase of three from 2009, and 110 are in one of two steps of improvement.

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‘Education Nation’
focuses attention on
public schools

Conference includes
power-packed Saturday

Let's get together!

Dr. Jonelle Adams



One of my goals as your new executive director is to get around the state to meet as many school directors and superintendents as I possibly can. I want to visit with you in person and hear about your successes, your challenges and your thoughts on how WSSDA can help you be effective in your role.

Looking at the calendar, I see several excellent opportunities for us to get to know each other a little better.

Regional Meetings. I'll be joining you at a number of WSSDA's Fall Regional Meetings in September and October. Your WSSDA Board members and staff are lining up some great programs at these meetings, all designed to provide up-to-the-minute information on topics of interest to you. This will also be an opportunity to share my vision of where WSSDA is headed in the coming months as we work to strengthen the association's role as a leading advocate for public education and student learning. I'm looking forward to sharing a meal with you and learning more about what's happening in your districts.

Legislative Assembly. This year's Assembly is critically important as we head into the 2011 Legislative Session, a session that will be challenged to make more tough budget and policy decisions affecting K-12 education. Our new Governmental Relations Director, Marie Sullivan, has done an outstanding job with the Pre-Assembly program, including a presentation from the state's Chief Economist, Dr. Arun Raha. Please be sure your district is represented as we forge our legislative agenda for the coming year.

Annual Conference. As a frequent attendee at past WSSDA Conferences, I know the kind of high-caliber programming that is offered. I'm excited about the sessions and presenters to "Power Up" at this year's Conference, and I'm especially excited for the opportunity to network with you and build relationships for the future. If you haven't yet registered, I hope you'll do so right away. I look forward to being with you in Spokane as we work to improve our skills as leaders for student learning.

I'll also be keeping an eye out for opportunities to come visit with you in your districts. In the meantime, please don't hesitate to give me a call or send me an email. I welcome your questions, comments and concerns.

My very best to you, and thanks for all you do.



Jonelle Adams
WSSDA Executive Director

Workshop addresses board's role in improving learning

Regional Lighthouse Workshop

Saturday, Sept. 18
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Sunnyside School District
Conference Room
Free of charge



School directors are faced with a wide range of educational achievement in their districts. Some students perform well, while others achieve below their potential and fail to complete high school. How

will you and your fellow board members address this?

Saturday, September 18, WSSDA's Leadership Development Services will host its first Regional Lighthouse Workshop, at the Sunnyside Conference Room, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. A complimentary lunch is included, and there is no charge for the workshop. The workshop targets directors and superintendents in ESD 105, however anyone is welcome to attend.

WSSDA is exploring possibilities for a regional facilitation of this important work, and will share preliminary findings of Lighthouse research on how boards can lead student improvement efforts in their districts.

The workshop provides school directors and superintendents an overview of the key learning of the Lighthouse Research Project. "If you have ever wanted to learn more about this exciting project or the board's role for improving student learning, you don't want to miss this opportunity," said Phil Gore, WSSDA's Director of Leadership Development Services. "You'll learn from your peers about their experiences in the project, and you will have the opportunity to develop strategies for improving student learning in your own district."

The workshop is provided through an agreement with OSPI's District Improvement Office to give additional support to district boards with schools in improvement. There are also scholarships available to enable districts with schools in improvement status to participate in the Lighthouse Project. For more information on the Lighthouse Project or to learn about how your district could participate, contact Phil Gore at P.Gore@wssda.org or 800.562.8927. To register for the Sunnyside workshop Sept. 18 e-mail Connie Lauderdale (C.Lauderdale@wssda.org) or visit wssda.org/workshops.

WSSDA Board supports Referendum 52

During its August meeting, the WSSDA Board of Directors voted to support a state ballot measure that would finance construction and repair projects increasing energy efficiency in public schools and higher education buildings.

The board cast a unanimous vote to formally support Referendum Bill 52. R-52, which will appear on the Nov. 2 General Election ballot, asks voters to approve the state's issuance of \$505 million in general obligation bonds to pay for certain construction and repair projects to improve energy efficiency in public schools and in higher education buildings.

Detailed information about R-52 is available through the state's online voters guide at vote.wa.gov. The guide includes explanatory statements, the full text of the referendum, pro/con arguments, and links to organizations supporting and opposing the proposal.

Under an advisory opinion issued by the state Executive Ethics Board in 1999, the WSSDA board is allowed to take a position on a ballot measure "when the subject of the ballot proposition clearly relates to education policy or the management of the state's school districts, and when there is no expenditure of public funds to promote or oppose the ballot proposition."

The opinion says the WSSDA board may also provide "general, factual information to its members on the possible impact of education-related ballot propositions."

The adoption of the resolution constitutes the position of the WSSDA board only; the board does not have authority to adopt positions on ballot measures on behalf of the full association.

In other news from the August board meeting:

- The board approved a "charge" for the soon-to-be-created WSSDA Task Force on Urban/Suburban Schools Issues. (see related article on Page 4 for more information, including how to apply to serve on the task force).
- The board accepted the resignation of Chris Stokke (Central Kitsap) as WSSDA board member for Director Area IV. Information on the replacement process will be sent to DA IV school directors and posted on the WSSDA website (wssda.org).
- The board worked on updating the WSSDA strategic plan for the coming year, with a focus on recommendations of the WSSDA Program and Operations Review conducted by the National School Boards Association and input from the WSSDA membership survey.

Nominating Committee names officer candidates



Fertakis



Long

The WSSDA Nominating Committee, chaired by Immediate Past President Martha Rice (Yakima), has put forward the following WSSDA officer candidates for 2011:

For President-elect: Mary Fertakis (Tukwila)

For Vice President: Debra Long (Central Valley)

Elections for WSSDA officer and committee positions take place at the association's Annual Conference in November. WSSDA's guide to the upcoming elections will be published in the October issue of *WSSDA Direct* and on the Web at wssda.org. The guide will include a complete list of positions subject to election this year.



WSSDA Legislative Assembly

September 24 - 25, 2010

Hilton Hotel, Vancouver, Washington

wssda.org/assembly

The Pre-Assembly program begins at 1 p.m. Friday (Sept. 24), and will feature presentations and panel discussions related to upcoming K-12 legislative issues. (A detailed agenda will be posted once it is finalized—see the Preliminary Assembly Handbook for a preliminary agenda at wssda.org/assembly.)

The Assembly will take place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday (Sept. 25). A list of proposals and positions up for consideration is available in the Preliminary Handbook.

School directors and district staff are encouraged to attend the Assembly, where all positions which have been proposed by school boards are acted upon, and become WSSDA legislative positions for the coming year if adopted. Positions are also prioritized by the Assembly as a guide to the Legislative Committee and the WSSDA Board of Directors in finalizing a "package" of legislative priorities—issues which will receive the greatest emphasis in the association's advocacy efforts.



Deborah Heart, WSSDA President-elect (Goldendale), along with WSSDA's 2010 FRN delegation, met with Senator Maria Cantwell in her Washington D.C. office.

Give federal advocacy a try

WSSDA members interested in grassroots advocacy for public education may consider joining WSSDA's Federal Relations Network, part of a nationwide network of school directors under the auspices of the National School Boards Association, representing every congressional district in the country. FRN members have the opportunity to make a difference in the education of our nation's schoolchildren, encouraging Congress to make public education a top priority of the federal government.

FRN members are appointed by their state associations to attend the FRN Conference and remain in contact with their members of Congress regarding key education issues throughout the year.

FRN members will travel to the NSBA FRN Conference in Washington D.C., Feb. 6-8, 2011. Questions? Contact Sheila Chard (S.Chard@wssda.org or 360.252.3011).

T+L offers new lower rates and sessions on doing more with less

NSBA's Technology and learning conference for school leaders has extended early bird rates through the conference. Information and online registration can be found at www.nsba.org/tl. T+L takes place Oct. 19-21, 2010, in Phoenix. Many of the 100 sessions will highlight how the right technology investment can save districts money and boost achievement by integrating the latest tools and programs. In addition, sessions will be offered on best practices on 21st century skills, using open source, cybersafety resources, and more.

Applicants sought for new urban-suburban task force

WSSDA is seeking applicants for membership on the association's new Task Force on Urban/Suburban Schools Issues.

Creation of the task force was approved by the WSSDA Board of Directors earlier this year. At its August meeting, the board approved a "charge" for the new task force and gave the go-ahead for recruitment of members.

The goal of the task force, as approved by the board, is "to bring together school districts of a typical student population of at least 10,000 or otherwise facing challenges common to a surrounding urban-suburban area to discuss issues and recommend action. Issues to be considered include student achievement, ethnic diversity, low income and poverty services, law enforcement and safety, inter-district collaboration, school facilities, and related topics of concern to all school directors in an effort to chart recommended policies and direction for this class of school district, as well as others that may be impacted by similar challenges."

With consent of the board, the task force may produce detailed reports or offer workshops to WSSDA members. The task force is also expected to report annually to the board on areas covered during the course of the year and provide recommendations for board action as needed. (A full description of the task force is available at wssda.org.)

If you are interested in serving on this task force, contact WSSDA President Kevin Lavery at 206.498.8726 or wssdaprez@gmail.com.

The Magna Awards 2011 nomination period is open

The Magna Awards is a national recognition program co-sponsored by American School Board Journal, the National School Boards Association, and Sodexo School Services. For the past 16 years, the Magna Awards panel of independent judges has reviewed school board best practices and innovative programs that showcase school district leadership, creativity, and commitment to student achievement.

Awards are made in three enrollment categories (under 5,000; 5,000-20,000; and over 20,000) with one grand prize winner in each category. Each grand prize winner receives a monetary award, and all winners receive national recognition.

Past award winners in Washington state include Vancouver Public Schools, Bridgeport School District, Auburn School District, Clover Park School District, and West Valley School District. Nominations must be submitted online at www.asbj.com/magnanominations by Oct. 15, 2010.

Join the Leadership WSSDA Class of 2011

Applications are now being accepted for Leadership WSSDA, the association's premier training program for school directors interested in taking their leadership skills to the highest level.

Leadership WSSDA is comprised of five intensive Friday/Saturday sessions beginning in March and continuing in May, August, and October. The program concludes with culminating presentations and graduation preceding the WSSDA Annual Conference in November.

Each session involves hands-on, small-group training in leadership, teambuilding, communications, community connections, diversity, change management, and more.

Further details and cost information will be posted on the WSSDA website soon. For applications and program information, visit wssda.org or contact Leadership Development Services Director Phil Gore at P.Gore@wssda.org or 360.252.3020.

NEWS BRIEFS

School administrators statewide elected Joel Aune, Superintendent of the Snoqualmie Valley School District, to the Washington Association of School Administrators presidency beginning July 2011. He serves as President-elect throughout the term of the current president, Saundra Hill, superintendent of the Pasco School District.

Aune began his career in 1983 as a teacher, then assistant principal, in the Cashmere School District. His career took him to Walla Walla, where he became an elementary school principal. He went on to serve as superintendent in both Colfax and now Snoqualmie Valley, a position he has held since 2005. More information about WASA can be found at www.wasa-oly.org.

OSPI is updating all state testing and graduation requirement handouts, which can be found at www.k12.wa.us/Resources. *Your Child's Progress, State Testing 2011* and *Earning a Diploma: Class of 2011 and Beyond* are updated and posted. Many of the handouts are also available in the Cambodian, Chinese, Korean, Punjabi, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, and Vietnamese languages.

Four teachers from Washington state have been selected as finalists for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST). Barbara Franz of North Elementary (Moses Lake), Nancy Pfaff of

Horace Mann Elementary (Lake Washington), Dawn Sparks of Thorp Elementary (Thorp) and Debra Strong of Forest View Elementary (Everett) were selected by a statewide committee comprised of content area experts and teachers. Their nominations were confirmed by the national PAEMST program.

The PAEMST program announces national award recipients in the late spring or early summer. State level finalists are recognized by regional and state math and science associations and will be invited to several events for Washington's Exceptional Educators during the coming year.

First Lady Michelle Obama introduced the *Let's Move* campaign to combat childhood obesity. Her plan for schools—presented in detail on the website www.letsmove.gov—is summarized in these five steps:

1. Create a school health advisory council;
2. Join the HealthierUS Schools Challenge;
3. Make your school a healthy worksite;
4. Incorporate nutrition education and physical education into the curriculum; and
5. Plant a school garden.

The school component of *Let's Move* aims to help principals, teachers and parents make schools healthier places to learn by providing quality nutrition, integrating physical activity during the school day, and teaching children about the importance of embracing a healthy, active lifestyle.

Boards of Distinction deadline this month



Applications for the WSSDA Boards of Distinction/Board of the Year program are due Sept. 27, 2010. Districts of all sizes—small, medium and large—are encouraged to apply. Boards of Distinction was piloted in 2009 to align WSSDA board awards with the new Washington School Board Standards. The application process is an excellent way to assess your board's alignment with the standards.

This year, Benchmark "A" of each standard is the basis for the application. Improved over last year, the new streamlined process limits paperwork, encourages collaboration by the board/superintendent team, and creates the opportunity to reapply each year as the program focuses on a new set of benchmarks.

Visit wssda.org > Awards & Recognition for details and application forms.

Three file for election to SBE

Three candidates have filed to run in the special election for Position 3 on the State Board of Education. Connie Fletcher, Dr. Fred O'Neal, and B. Robert Perkins will vie for the position—one of five on the 16-member board that are elected by local school directors. The special election is required to complete the remainder of an unexpired term. The position is currently held by Connie Fletcher of Issaquah, appointed in September 2009 to fill a vacancy.

School directors residing in Western Washington (defined in state rules as Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Pierce, San Juan, Skagit, Skamania, Snohomish, Thurston, Wahkiakum, and Whatcom counties) are eligible to vote in the election.

WSSDA will provide printed and online voters' guides to the election this fall. Ballots will be mailed to school directors in Western Washington Oct. 29 and are due back to OSPI no later than Nov 24. Results will be announced Dec. 7.

Fall Regional Meeting schedule

Visit wssda.org/regionalmeetings to sign up for a WSSDA Regional Meeting near you:

Anacortes

Tuesday, Sept. 28, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Carnation

Wednesday, Sept. 29, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Wilbur

Thursday, Sept. 30, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Quilcene

Saturday, Oct. 2, 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

Walla Walla

Monday, Oct. 4, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Brewster

Tuesday, Oct. 5, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Yakima

Tuesday, Oct. 5, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Hoquiam

Wednesday, Oct. 6, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Ephrata

Wednesday, Oct. 6, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Lakewood

Thursday, Oct. 7, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Brush Prairie

Wednesday, Oct. 13, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Republic

Wednesday, Oct. 13, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

Spokane Valley

Thursday, Oct. 14, 6:00-8:30 p.m.

WELCOME, NEW SCHOOL DIRECTORS!

Congratulations and welcome to the following new school directors:

Nikola Chopra, *Lopez Island*
Steve Jilk, *Lynden*
Jeffery Dong, *Pasco*
Rebecca Richie, *Wishkah Valley*
David Garcia, *Yakima*

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

Melissa Miller, *La Center*
Todd Lingbloom, *Lynden*
Newton Moats, *Soap Lake*
Jim Peterson, *Wishkah Valley*

twitter



Sign up for a Twitter account to receive WSSDA "tweets"—brief updates on education news and association activities. Visit www.twitter.com/wssda.

www.twitter.com/wssda.

OSPI is on social media as well. Visit www.twitter.com/waOSPI to sign up for OSPI tweets. To follow OSPI on Facebook, go to www.facebook.com/waOSPI and click "Like."

September 'Education Nation' events focus on public schools

September brings a series of events which will focus a great deal of attention on state of the nation's public schools—and on school boards.

September 21: NSBA will release *School Boards Circa 2010*, a new research report commissioned with the Iowa School Boards Foundation, the Thomas B. Fordham Institute, and the Wallace Foundation. WSSDA will provide links to the downloadable report on NSBA's website www.nsba.org and will coordinate with NSBA to provide other support materials online.

The week of September 27: NBC News will launch "Education Nation"—a nationally broadcast in-depth conversation about improving education in America, beginning with an interactive two-day summit on Rockefeller Plaza in New York City.

September 24: *Waiting for Superman*, a new documentary film directed by Davis Guggenheim (*An Inconvenient Truth*), opens in New York and Los Angeles. Scheduled to be released nationwide in October, the film chronicles five families (from New York City, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C.) on "their quest to get their kids into better schools."

The *Waiting for Superman* website links to NSBA's State Associations of School Boards page (www.nsba.org/SecondaryMenu/StateAssociations.aspx) in its "Take Action" section. It encourages individuals to connect with their local school boards. The section reads: "Speak Out: Attend a school board meeting and speak up about the education issues you care about. Your local school board meets frequently and most meetings are open to the public."

Check wssda.org for further updates and supporting materials in regard to these national initiatives.



Annual Conference concludes with a power-packed Saturday

Your *Power Up* registration brochure was mailed last month, however, online conference registration has been open since May at wssda.org/conference, and hotel reservations may be made through the website as well. To save money, register by Oct. 22; check the website for information on conference scholarships.

Don't miss Saturday's powerhouse lineup

While making plans and preparing schedules, attendees should not overlook the powerhouse lineup on Saturday: four options for major in-depth sessions, or an hour-long close-up session with the closing keynote speaker. In fact, school directors who can attend *only* on Saturday would experience a very worthwhile half day comprised of a continental breakfast, a workshop session and the closing keynote speaker. Many attendees depart early, but many who stay say they actually prefer the Saturday environment. According to one past attendee: "Those who stay are usually highly dedicated, non-stop learners who relish the less hectic atmosphere and ability to participate in more in-depth conversations."

Saturday's 8 a.m. workshop options are:

- *School Board Leadership: A Proud Past and a Challenging Future*, with panel and interactive discussion focusing on the works of Diane Ravitch
- *WIAA Hot Topics*, presented by Mike Colbrese, WIAA Executive Director
- *Leading, Learning and Living in School 2.0*, with Bob Smart, Assistant Superintendent, Teaching & Learning, ESD 123, and ESD technology gurus Brent Howard and John Kelly
- *Achievement Gap: Creating Resiliency and Support for Culturally Responsive Schools*, presented by Erin Jones, Assistant Superintendent, Student Achievement, OSPI

The 10 a.m. Closing General Session features keynoter Dr. David Steinberg.

Webinar: Getting the most out of Annual Conference

Next month you will have the opportunity to participate in a WSSDA webinar designed to prepare you to gain the most from your conference experience. Watch for details about this free online opportunity which will take place Tuesday, Oct. 12, noon to 1 p.m., and be available on the website thereafter.

Get ready with SCHED

View the conference program through an interactive calendar and social networking tool hosted by SCHED. A link will be provided from wssda.org/conference. Using this tool you can easily browse content-area strands or find general sessions and special events. Sign in and create your personal conference agenda, converse with other attendees, or exchange comments with the presenter on your expectations for a particular session. Try out SCHED today!

The full program will also be posted at wssda.org/conference.



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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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Rosh Hashanah (Begins at sundown 9/8) Sept. 9-10
State Board of Education, Renton Sept. 15-16
Yom Kippur (Begins at sundown 9/17) Sept. 18
WSSDA Board of Directors, Vancouver Sept. 23
WSSDA Legislative Committee, Vancouver Sept. 23
WSSDA Small Schools Task Force, Vancouver Sept. 24
WSSDA Resolutions Committee, Vancouver Sept. 24
WSSDA Legislative Assembly, Vancouver Sept. 24-25
WSSDA Regional Meeting, Anacortes Sept. 28
WSSDA Regional Meeting, Wilbur Sept. 30
Leadership WSSDA, Olympia Oct. 1-2
WSSDA Regional Meeting, Quilcene Oct. 2
WSSDA Regional Meeting, Walla Walla Oct. 4
WSSDA Regional Meeting, Brewster Oct. 5
WSSDA Regional Meeting, Yakima Oct. 5

For event details, visit wssda.org > Calendar.

WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES

- WSSDA ONLINE LEARNING: PUTTING YOUR DATA TO WORK FOR STUDENT SUCCESS
Sept. 8-Oct. 6
WSSDA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Vancouver, Washington: Sept. 24-25
NSBA T+L
Phoenix, Arizona: Oct. 19-21
WSSDA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Spokane: Nov. 17-20
NSBA FEDERAL RELATIONS NETWORK (FRN) CONFERENCE
Washington D.C.: Feb. 6-8, 2011
WASA/WSSDA Legislative Conference
Olympia: Feb. 27-28, 2011
NSBA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
San Francisco: April 9-11, 2011