



## McCleary case now up to the Supreme Court

Justices hear arguments on pivotal education funding lawsuit

A landmark lawsuit over whether the state is adequately funding public schools is now in the hands of the Washington State Supreme Court following a closely watched session of oral arguments June 28.

With an overflow crowd in attendance, justices spent an hour listening to and questioning arguments made by attorneys from both sides in a case that represents the most significant challenge to the state's education finance system in more than 30 years.

Last year, King County Superior Court Judge John Erlick ruled that the state is not complying with Article IX Section 1 of the Washington State Constitution, which declares that the state has a "paramount duty" to make "ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders."

The suit—*McCleary v. the State of Washington*—was organized by the Network for Excellence in Washington Schools (NEWS), a coalition of parents, school districts, unions, and community-based organizations formed to advocate for changes to the state's system for funding education. Carter and Kelsey McCleary are students in the Chimacum school district; the lawsuit was brought by their parents on their behalf.

Erlick's ruling required the Legislature to make "real and measurable progress" to establish the cost of basic education and find a stable way to pay for it.

Arguing the state's appeal of the Erlick ruling, Assistant State Attorney General Bill Clark said the state has an



Washington's nine Supreme Court Justices await arguments in *McCleary v. the State of Washington*. The case was heard June 28 at the Temple of Justice in Olympia.

obligation to meet the funding needs for basic education, but not to fund the full operating costs of school districts or protect districts from a decline in funding.

Questioned about teacher salary cuts imposed this legislative session, Clark suggested there would have to be evidence that this paring back would have an adverse effect on students. He argued that "enhancements" to basic education are now properly funded at the local level through the use of property tax levies. He also said the reductions from the 2011 legislative session weren't cuts to basic education, and that student test scores were evidence that the state was funding education sufficiently.

*continued on page 2*

# Board candidate workshops offered in July

School board candidates are invited to attend one of seven free workshops offered throughout the state in July by WSSDA. The two-hour sessions cover the fundamentals of school board service, including board/superintendent roles, legal requirements for school boards, and tips for effective leadership. Participants will also receive an overview of education reform efforts at the state and national levels. *(Note: These are not workshops on how to campaign.)*

Online resources are available as well, including WSSDA's popular manual *Serving on Your Local School Board: A Foundation for Success*. The manual and other materials, including locations and driving directions, are found at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Events > Regional Workshops > School Board Candidate Workshops.

## School Board Candidate Workshops



- Monday, July 18 ..... Olympia
- Tuesday, July 19..... Renton
- Wednesday, July 20..... Burlington
- Monday, July 25 ..... Wenatchee
- Tuesday, July 26..... Spokane
- Wednesday, July 27 ..... Yakima
- Thursday, July 28..... Vancouver

All workshops take place from 7 to 9 p.m.

## Leadership WSSDA 2012: Consider the challenge

Are you ready to take your school board leadership to the next level? Consider participating in Leadership WSSDA 2012. Look for more information coming your way this fall.

## Apply for Boards of Distinction



WSSDA recognized 23 Washington school boards as Boards of Distinction in the past two years. Consider adding your district to those honored at this year's Annual Conference.

The mailer pictured here will arrive in your mail in August. Or you may get started on your application now. Details and application forms are online at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Services > Leadership Development > Boards of Distinction. Applications are due Sept. 21.

## McCleary case

*continued from cover*

Arguing for McCleary and on behalf of the NEWS coalition, attorney Thomas Ahearne said three decades had passed since the state Supreme Court last called the Legislature to task, and education was still underfunded. Ahearne said the state knew how much was required to fund basic education but hadn't made it a priority. The Erlick decision, he said, requires the Legislature to step up and fund the students of today.

He argued that it was the high court's duty to compel the other branches of government to comply with the constitution when they aren't—as is the case in funding basic education.

“We can't just keep kicking the can down the road,” said Ahearne, arguing that the remedy he was seeking was full funding of basic education in a timely manner. Ahearne urged the court to put the “most important words they will ever put to paper” on the subject of education by requiring the Legislature to cover the actual costs of basic education in the state.

Clark agreed with Erlick that funding should be based on actual costs but argued that state funding had increased this biennium. He also pointed to the Legislature's approval of ESHB 2261, a 2009 law intended to revamp the state's education finance system.

“Let the Legislature do its job,” said Clark, arguing that it wasn't the court's role to determine how much funding should be spent.

A decision in the case is not expected until late this year.

## Board reviews website launch, strategic plan progress

The launch of WSSDA's new website and a review of two strategic plan goals were among the items of business at the June 24-25 regular meeting of the WSSDA Board of Directors.

The new WSSDA website was deployed June 28. The site has been completely redesigned to provide a more user-friendly navigation structure and easier access to services and resources. The site includes a new Resources area with presentations, publications and other materials organized by topic, and a section for new school board members. Also included is a new calendar of events section that allows visitors to easily track upcoming WSSDA conferences and meetings as well as education-related events from other organizations.

Another new feature is an online discussion forum where school directors can log on and post questions and comments on education issues and other topics. Per an earlier vote of the WSSDA Board, the forum takes the place of the association's email discussion listserv, which has been discontinued. School directors can register to participate in the forum at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Resources under "WSSDA Online Community." The forum is open for viewing by all site visitors.

In other business at the June meeting:

- The board heard and provided feedback on staff progress reports regarding the WSSDA Strategic Plan. At this meeting, reports were provided on Goal 4: Governance (which centers on the association's policy and legal services) and Goal 5: Communications and Marketing. Previous reports focused on Association Services and Leadership Development; the next report will be on Advocacy and Governmental Relations.
- The board approved a resolution calling on the federal government to provide relief from regulations and sanctions of the No Child Left Behind Act until Congress arrives at some agreement as to how the act should be rewritten.
- The board accepted a just-completed report summarizing a series of suggestions from school directors on improving key transition points in the P-20 education system. The suggestions were distilled from a school director "brainstorming" project conducted earlier this year at the request of Gov. Chris Gregoire. The report is available on the WSSDA website at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Resources.

For information about WSSDA Board of Directors meetings, contact the board representative for your Director Area, or WSSDA Executive Director Jonelle Adams (360.252.3001, [j.adams@wssda.org](mailto:j.adams@wssda.org)).

## Register now for fall Legislative Assembly

**2011 Legislative Assembly: Pasco Red Lion Hotel**  
**Pre-Assembly program: Friday, Sept. 23, 1 p.m.**  
**Assembly: Saturday, Sept. 24, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.**



For a description of the effects of the 2011 legislative session on WSSDA's positions, read or download *WSSDA's Legislative Summary 2011* at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Legislative.

The annual WSSDA Legislative Assembly is integral to the creation of the association's legislative agenda. During the assembly, school directors will discuss, decide upon, and prioritize this agenda for 2012. Subject to final approval by the WSSDA Board of Directors, this agenda will determine the direction for WSSDA's advocacy efforts in the coming year.

Register online at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Events. For those paying by check, use the printed form which will be available online and mailed to each board's Legislative Representative.

Pre-registration is \$195 through Sept. 2. Registration includes Friday evening reception/hors d'oeuvres, Saturday breakfast and lunch. After Sept. 2, registration is \$220 and must be completed onsite at the assembly. (There will be a \$50 charge for cancellations received after Sept. 2. No-shows are not eligible to receive refunds.)

See [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Events for hotel information or call the Pasco Red Lion Hotel at 800.Red.Lion. Be sure to indicate that you are attending the WSSDA Legislative Assembly.

## Brainstorming focuses on educational transition points

In March, WSSDA extended an invitation to school directors to attend a brainstorming session to generate ideas for improving educational transitions. The idea for the sessions was prompted by a meeting between WSSDA leadership and Gov. Chris Gregoire. The governor asked for suggestions on ways to work towards a “seamless” education structure for Washington’s P-20 system.

Brainstorming sessions were held in Yakima and Renton, and ideas generated by these groups were synthesized and posted on an application called Ideascale that allows visitors to vote on their favorite ideas and comment on ideas already submitted. Over 56 directors participated in Ideascale.

WSSDA staff then took the prioritized ideas and distilled them into “transition themes” that school directors identified as important to improving the transition points in the state’s education system. WSSDA’s seven transition themes are:

1. Support early pre-school learning efforts and engage the larger community in early learning practices and methods.
2. Early college planning; providing information to families should start in sixth grade.
3. Effective transitions are built on early assessment and intervention, including differentiated instruction, personalized education and response to intervention.
4. Use online and blended courses to improve student learning and reduce costs.
5. Provide targeted interventions for eighth graders at risk of dropping out in high school; i.e. extended day, summer school, Saturday school, AVID.
6. Restructure the school year and open up the “boxed in” system of grades/age-bound classrooms.
7. Create closer ties to post-secondary systems and create seamless entrance policies; work on testing requirements and prep students for success.

WSSDA staff then provided additional research, compiling a report highlighting educational trends related to each theme, both in Washington and around the country, and providing links to scholarly research and current policy initiatives of interest.

The themes coalesce around a few common goals: improve student achievement, particularly with regard to high school graduation rates and the percentage of students attending college, and find ways to target instruction to improve outcomes for students who struggle in traditional classrooms. Research reveals the importance of developing a focused and coordinated approach to early childhood education in order to improve kindergarten readiness, highlighting innovative programs integrating technology and online learning formats into conventional classrooms.

Executive Director Jonelle Adams provided an update on the status of the transitions research at the WSSDA board meeting June 25. The full report on the brainstorming sessions is available at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Resources.

## Annual Conference news

Online registration for the 2011 Annual Conference is open and WSSDA is pleased to announce that credit cards are being accepted. When considering attending, remember that this year’s conference runs Thursday through Sunday. Our new WSSDA Conference Registrar, KF Events, is ready and willing to assist with your registration or housing questions. Contact them at [wssda@kfevents.com](mailto:wssda@kfevents.com) or 206.349.5913 if you have questions.

There is room for everyone to stay at the Conference hotel, the Hyatt Regency Bellevue. Rooms are available until Oct. 14 at the discounted rate of \$139/night. Reservations are available online only; you will receive the reservations link with your Conference registration confirmation.

Visit [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Events to register and learn more about the WSSDA Annual Conference.

## WELCOME, NEW SCHOOL DIRECTORS!

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

Kristen Butler, *Chimacum*  
April Schroeder, *Enumclaw*  
Rod Collins, *McCleary*  
Teresa Nunez, *McCleary*  
Clarence Perry, *Oakesdale*

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

Anne Long, *Central Valley*  
Heather Williams, *McCleary*  
Amy Warwick, *Oakesdale*  
Jay Rosapepe, *South Kitsap*

## WSSDA positions due

School directors have been mailed a WSSDA resolution proposal form which must be submitted by Friday, August 19; forms are also posted online at [wssda.org](http://wssda.org). Questions? Contact Linda Lowery ([L.Lowery@wssda.org](mailto:L.Lowery@wssda.org)).



# Annual Conference Early Birds: Bootcamp, STEM, Ethics

Register now for the WSSDA Annual Conference  
November 17 - 20, 2011, Hyatt Regency Bellevue

This year's Nov. 17 early bird line-up includes two full-day boot camps, an off-site STEM experience, and a half-day workshop on the ethics of boardmanship. Lunch is included in all but the ethics workshop.

## Ethical Leadership: How Can I Take the High Road? (1 - 5 p.m.)

*Lynn Beck, Dean and Professor of  
Education, University of the Pacific*

Ethical challenges abound in every sector of society—business, religion, social and education. In this workshop, consider time-tested principles of conduct and decision-making that unify and make sense of your work and improve outcomes for your students. Current ethical dilemmas and examples of difficult board scenarios set the stage for intriguing discussion.

Learn proven conflict management techniques, develop frameworks for productive discussion and take home practical steps for consensus building.

## Pathways to Prosperity: Technology Site Visits (10 a.m. - 5 p.m.)

*William Symonds, Harvard Graduate  
School of Education • Dave Gering,  
Executive Director, Manufacturing  
Industrial Council*

One conclusion from a February 2011 report from the Harvard Graduate School of Education is that students need better exposure to career exploration and work-based learning experiences. Hear from the author of this *Pathways to Prosperity* report, then take a field trip to local technical schools to see hands-on learning programs

and explore possibilities for expanding student learning options in your district.

## New Board Boot Camp

(10 a.m. – 5 p.m.)

*Phil Gore, WSSDA Director of Leadership  
Development Services • Members of  
the Leadership WSSDA Class of 2011 •  
WSSDA Cadre*

Newly elected and first term school directors will gain insight into their roles and responsibilities on the board, within the district and within the community. This high-energy boot camp delivers board-superintendent relationship building techniques for a smooth transition onto the team. Discover resources for and support and begin to develop a network of colleagues from around the state. You will receive tools for building positive relationships and begin your journey into continuous improvement as a school director.

## Legislative Boot Camp (10 a.m. - 5 p.m. or half-day options)

*Marie Sullivan, WSSDA Director of  
Governmental Relations*

### 1. Introduction to the Legislature (10 a.m. - 2 p.m.)

What happens in Olympia when the Legislature is in session has huge policy and fiscal implications for school districts. School directors who wish to understand the Washington state legislative process, the players, and the politics will find this session full of hands-on learning. A bit of homework is required.

# Take Charge

WSSDA Annual Conference 2011

Learn to read a bill and identify the potential impact on your district. Learn how to write clear, concise testimony. Over a lunch with afternoon attendees, sit in on a lively discussion with former school directors who are now state legislators. Learn how school directors can make the most of their former colleagues' knowledge to boost a public schools agenda.

## 2. Putting Legislative Knowledge into Practice (1 - 5 p.m.)

This is a continuation of learning for school directors who have taken the "Intro to the Legislature" morning course or have knowledge of legislative basics. Working with current legislators, we'll focus on how to make the most of limited time with legislators and executive branch leaders, and how to make your messages zing! The latter part of the day will focus on building a year-round advocacy program.

## Interactive conference schedule

An interactive conference schedule—SCHED—will be available online and as a mobile app by early August. View session details, search for sessions by strand, create your personalized schedule, or network with others planning to attend the same sessions as you. Get even more out of your conference experience by initiating conversations with presenters prior to the big event; you may clarify expectations or even influence their presentation for the better!

# Scarborough leaves WSSDA staff



Marilee Scarborough, Director of Policy and Legal Services, resigned from WSSDA's staff in order to accept a new position as legal counsel for the Vancouver School District.

Scarborough headed the policy and legal arm of WSSDA's member services for eight years. She served as legal counsel to the Association, editor of *Policy News*, taught consistently well-received workshops and conference sessions on school legal and policy governance, and responded to thousands of e-mails and phone inquiries from school directors, administrators, parents and the public.

WSSDA is the state's primary entity for school policy development and Scarborough oversees the WSSDA policy manual, developing model policies to address emerging needs of districts. Recently these included a new harassment, intimidation and bullying policy, a telecommunications devices policy, a policy to manage the use of restraints, and a competency-based credits policy. She has filed amicus briefs in court proceedings, most recently in the Seattle School Board's appeal of a case involving its adoption of a particular math curriculum. WSSDA's Board of Directors and its staff join to congratulate her on her excellent service to WSSDA members, and wish her success and interesting new experiences in the future.

## Innovation schools and innovative zones

The Washington Legislature passed a law allowing school districts to apply to their ESD for designation as an Innovative School or Innovative Zone. Applications are due to ESDs Jan. 6, 2012 and the process for applying is described in detail in the legislation (Innovation Schools and Zones ESSHB 1546).

Priority is placed on schools focused on the arts, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (A-STEM) programs that actively partner with the community, business and higher education to implement project-based or hands-on learning.

The designation begins in the 2012-13 school year and is good for six years.

Applications must include:

- Why designation would enhance student achievement and close the achievement gap;
- Research-based activities and innovations to be carried out;
- Justification for waiver of state statutes and rules that are authorized;
- Justification of requests for additional waivers beyond those authorized;
- Budget and anticipated sources of funding;
- Evaluation and accountability processes that rely on multiple measures of student achievement;
- District support for waiver of local rules and modification of collective bargaining agreements if necessary to implement the plan;
- Letters of support from the district, staff, and community; and
- Approval of the plan by a majority of staff assigned to the school or schools.

WSSDA met with the bill sponsor during its development and will work with districts to apply for this program. Watch for further information and links to application materials in the coming months.



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## Regional Meetings: Fall schedule announced

The schedule for WSSDA's fall Regional Meetings has been set. These meetings are small, close-to-home gatherings—your opportunity to dialogue, network and share information with school directors from around your region, and hear presentations on current issues from education leaders.

Individual meeting agendas will be posted later this summer. Among other topics, you can count on an update on legislative initiatives and a brief update from WSSDA officers and staff on association activities.

## Regional Meeting Schedule

Thursday, September 29, McCleary, DA 5  
Thursday, September 29, DuPont, DA 3  
Saturday, October 1, Port Townsend, DA 4  
Monday, October 3, Napavine, DA 5  
Monday, October 3, Prescott, DA 11  
Tuesday, October 4, Wenatchee, DA 7  
Wednesday, October 5, Cheney, DA 10  
Thursday, October 6, Everett, DA 1  
Thursday, October 6, Cusick, DA 9  
Monday, October 10, Issaquah, DA 2  
Tuesday, October 11, Cle Elum, DA 8  
Monday, October 17, Vancouver, DA 6

Week night meetings are held from 6 to 8:30 p.m. and include dinner. Saturday meetings are held from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. and include lunch. The only charge is for your meal.

Visit [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > Events for registration, meeting locations, driving directions, and agendas. If you or your district are interested in hosting a future WSSDA Regional Meeting, please contact your WSSDA Board of Directors Representative or Terri Eixenberger in the WSSDA office (360.252.3002).

## NEWS BRIEFS

**Six Washington secondary teachers have been selected as state-level finalists for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST).**

They are Robert Ettinger (Seattle), John Gallagher (Port Angeles), Kimberly Taylor (Enumclaw), George Christoph (North Thurston), Andrew Means (Enumclaw) and Nathan Shields (Vancouver).

The national PAEMST program typically announces national award recipients in the spring. 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 next year.

**Creston School District Superintendent/Principal William Wadlington has received a \$1,000 scholarship to support his graduate studies at Washington State University.** Wadlington, a doctoral student in Educational Leadership, was awarded the ninth annual Dr. Doyle E. Winter Scholarship for Administrative Leadership in Education. The scholarship is awarded by the Washington Association of School Administrators and Seattle-Northwest Securities Corporation.

**The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) released its report on state revenues by source and expenditures by function for public elementary and secondary education for school year 2008-09.**

Findings include:

- Current expenditures per pupil for public elementary and secondary education were \$10,591 in Fiscal Year (FY) 2009.
- Adjusting for inflation, per pupil state and local revenues decreased by one percent or more in 16 states and increased by 1 percent or more in 25 states from FY 08 to FY 09.
- Between FY 08 and FY 09, per pupil expenditures decreased by 1 percent or more in eight states and increased by 1 percent or more in 36 states. To browse or download the document, visit [nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2011329](http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2011329).

**The 2010 NAEP U.S. History assessment for 4th, 8th, and 12th graders was released in June.** Results were encouraging at the 4th and 8th grade levels, especially for minority and lower-achieving students, while scores at the 12th grade level have remained stagnant for over a decade. The summary was prepared by the Center for Public Education and is available at [www.nationsreportcard.gov/ushistory\\_2010/](http://www.nationsreportcard.gov/ushistory_2010/).





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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Independence Day . . . . . July 4
Board of Natural Resources . . . . . July 5
Professional Educator Standards Board, Tumwater . . July 7-8
NSBA Pacific Region Summer Meeting, Portland . . . July 8-10
State Board of Education, Tulalip . . . . . July 12-14
WSSDA Executive Committee conference call . . . . . July 14
WSSDA Legislative Committee, Olympia . . . . . July 22-23
WSSDA Nominating Committee, Olympia . . . . . July 30
State Board of Education special meeting, Renton . . . Aug. 9
Starting Strong Institute, Spokane . . . . . Aug. 11-12
Leadership WSSDA, Olympia . . . . . Aug. 12-13
WSSDA Executive Committee conference call . . . . . Aug. 18
WSSDA Board of Directors Retreat . . . . . Aug. 26-28
Labor Day . . . . . Sept. 5
WSSDA Executive Committee conference call . . . . . Sept. 15
Leadership WSSDA, Olympia . . . . . Sept. 16-17
WSSDA Legislative Committee . . . . . Sept. 22

WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES

SCHOOL BOARD CANDIDATE WORKSHOPS
Olympia: July 18
Renton: July 19
Burlington: July 20
Wenatchee: July 25
Spokane: July 26
Yakima: July 27
Vancouver: July 28
WSSDA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Pasco: Sept. 23-24
WSSDA ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Bellevue Hyatt Regency: Nov. 17-20
WSSDA/WASA LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE
Olympia: January 29 - 30, 2012
NSBA FEDERAL RELATIONS NETWORK CONFERENCE
Washington D.C: Feb. 5-7, 2012