



News Release

Washington State School Directors' Association
June 28, 2016

For Immediate Release.

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WASA honors Burke with Mertens award

The Washington Association of School Administrators honored WSSDA Executive Director Alan Burke Monday with the Barbara Mertens Legacy Award.

“Alan is an outstanding choice for this year's Barbara Mertens Award,” said WASA Executive Director Bill Keim. “Much like Barbara, Alan has been a tireless advocate for our public schools and the students they serve. And much like Barbara, the legacy of his vision, dedication, and service will benefit Washington's students for decades to come.”

The honor was awarded during the group's joint conference with the Association of Washington School Principals in Spokane. It is given to a person or group who has had a significant impact on public education in Washington state.

"Barbara was one of my absolute heroes in this business," Burke said. "She was the reason we have a 50 percent, plus one, threshold for levy votes and every superintendent and board in the state is thankful. She was a great role model and I feel very fortunate for this recognition."

Burke, who is retiring in July from WSSDA, is also a former deputy superintendent at the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction and superintendent of the Yelm School district. He also worked during his long career in education as a teacher and principal. When he leaves WSSDA, he will take a temporary post with the Governor's Office to help with the McCleary school funding effort.

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About WSSDA — Founded in 1922, the Washington State School Directors' Association is comprised of all 1,477 school board members from Washington's 295 school districts. The districts they lead serve more than one million students, have a combined annual budget of about \$10 billion, and employ more than 160,000 people. WSSDA's core mission is focused on ensuring that school board members have the knowledge, tools and services they need to effectively govern their districts and improve student learning.