



WSSDA

direct

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2018



Wapato's New Digs

Saving taxpayers millions of dollars while expanding school facilities—see how **Wapato School District** pulled a rabbit out of its hat, **pg. 10**. Plus more news and **stories >>**



From the Executive Director

A new Direct(ion)

It's 2018 and this is our first issue of *Direct* since the end of last year. A lot has changed since then. Not only is it a new year, but we have a new WSSDA Board, an updated mission and vision, and soon, a new WSSDA headquarters, which you'll read about inside.

At the conclusion of our 2017 Annual Conference, **new members took office** on WSSDA's board. We're excited to see them join, but also sorry to see our veterans moving on. But, those veterans have helped shape some important developments for WSSDA, not the least of which are our association's updated mission and vision.

Along with the new mission and vision are an updated set of beliefs, one of which states: "Public school directors are best served through an innovative, responsive and flexible organization which provides exceptional leadership, professional learning, and services in governance, policy, and advocacy." The current issue of *Direct* is an expression of this belief and here's why.

WSSDA Direct is evolving. It is our hope that it will grow into a platform that helps school directors share their knowledge, experience and perspective with each other. In this way, it can become a resource that will inform and reflect the work of Washington's school boards.

Just like our staff, *Direct* is seeking to become more member-centric than ever. In our call for submissions (look to your right) you'll see we're trying to create opportunities for directors to connect with each other by sharing their voice. **The desire to connect is something we heard loud and clear in our past member surveys.**

So this is us, aspiring innovators revamping *Direct* to be responsive to the wants and needs of our members. We hope you'll enjoy this issue, and thank you all for your ongoing work in support of public education.

Tim Garchow, WSSDA Executive Director



Photo shown above: WSSDA staff reviewing the association's updated mission, vision, and goals and how we work together to help fulfill all three.



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Add your voice!

Use *Direct* to share your learning with peers.

DIRECTOR TO DIRECTOR

We're looking to spotlight WSSDA members who'd like share their insights as veteran board members, newcomers, or as exemplars of small, medium or large districts. If that's you, let us know!

PASSION PIECES

Is there a subject you feel strongly about which you'd like to raise with fellow school directors? Then submit a "passion piece" in which you A) share why the issue is important to you, B) describe what you've learned about it that others may not know, and C) explain how this issue has informed your work as a school director.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

If your district has experienced success (or failure) that would be instructive to others, let us know so we can help you tell the story!

REVIEWED BY PEERS

Is there a book, a training or professional development event, software, or even an app that has benefited you? Did it help your school district, or even just one school? Then spread the word by writing a review about it. Your story will give peers a chance to take notice.

For submissions, questions or comments,
contact Sean Duke, communications officer at
s.duke@wssda.org.

Produced quarterly by


WSSDA
Washington State School Directors' Association

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Leadership Development

– Colleen Miller

Our branch is experiencing an uptick in **on-site professional development**. The most requested content focuses on strong foundations for school directors—board and superintendent roles and responsibilities, relationships and operating protocol reviews—as well as team-building and superintendent evaluation.

Going forward, strategic planning processes will be revised to offer **three levels of planning** to meet the needs of small, medium and large school systems.

Work continues on a **multi-year project** to be called *WSSDA On Board* that will bring a tiered-curriculum approach to professional development. This approach will align with the WSSDA Standards for School Directors and the WSSDA Board Self-Assessment.

Once again, WSSDA will partner with the Washington Association of School Administrators and the Association of Washington School Principals to provide the conference **Equity: From the Boardroom to the Classroom on May 23, 2018**.



ESD 113, Tumwater, above right, hosted a WSSDA Board Boot Camp session on Feb. 10. Boot camp was held on the east and west sides of the state to maximize the ability of members to participate.



Government Relations

– Jessica Vavrus

As *Direct* goes to print, a lot is happening as we approach the end of the 2018 legislative session. Nevertheless, we're already looking ahead to refining WSSDA's legislative positions in preparation for September's Legislative Assembly.

The annual Legislative Assembly will be September 21–22 in Spokane. That Friday, WSSDA will host a pre-assembly program where directors, superintendents, and other education leaders can discuss current hot topics and emerging issues. Then on Saturday, delegates from each school board will spend the day deliberating on and prioritizing WSSDA's positions.

To help school boards prepare for the assembly, we'll distribute a handbook in August that contains all the positions up for consideration. We hope this will give boards time for reflection with respect to local priorities.

Above left, Government Relations Director Jessica Vavrus sharing WSSDA's priorities in the K12 Education Stakeholder briefing with the governor in January.

Policy and Legal

– Abigail Westbrook

We're thrilled to have recently published the latest issue of **Policy & Legal News**, featuring an **ESSA conversion toolkit!** It was a big task because it was comprised of many components, scattered throughout the WSSDA Model Policies and Procedures, which is also why it is a huge benefit to our members.

The Policy and Legal team have been enjoying collaboration with WSSDA's Government Relations branch during this session of the Legislature. We help by **analyzing bills, providing feedback, and suggesting alternative language**. This work is important, time-sensitive, and positively impacting legislation!

Policy and Legal is also partnering with Government Relations to **streamline the Positions Committee**, which is comprised of members from the Resolutions Committee, Legislative Committee, and three members of WSSDA's Board of Directors. This committee is embarked on a mission to review and reconcile WSSDA's permanent and legislative positions. The work of the Streamlining Positions Committee reminds me of what is happening in the Policy and Legal branch and throughout WSSDA: **increasing clarity, assuring relevancy, and reducing redundancy**. In short, building greater coherence.





New on the Board

At the conclusion of WSSDA's Annual Conference, **four new members took their positions on WSSDA's board: Siri Bliesner** from Lake Washington School District (Director Area 2), **Geoffery McAnalloy** from Federal Way School District (Director Area 2), **Carolynn Perkins** from Bremerton School District (Director Area 4), and **Steve Christensen** from Pasco School District (Director Area 11).

These new members will serve a three-year term. Please join us in giving thanks to our outgoing directors for their service, most of whom are still actively engaged on WSSDA committees: **Claire Wilson** of Federal Way School District (Director Area 2), **Cindy Kelly** of Port Angeles School District (Director Area 4), **Larry Ayre** of Finley School District (Director Area 11), and Immediate Past President **Chris Nation** of Marysville School District (Director Area 1).

See the full board at wssda.org/board.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Lessons from experience

The 2017 Boards of the Year – Raymond, Quincy, and Issaquah – share successful approaches to closing the opportunity gap, and the ability to demonstrate how actions of the school board aligned to support district achievement goals.

Watch this space as we flesh out some best practices over the next several newsletters.

If you're curious to learn more now, the **Boards of the Year winners' application materials** are available for review at wssda.org/bod.



On the docket

MARCH 1 -MAY 16

Regional Meetings

(see page 7 for complete listing)

MARCH 15 -APRIL 30

Legislative Position Proposal Submission

Position Proposal Submission Window Opens **3/15** and Informational Webinar, **3/16**. To participate in (or view after) the webinar, a registration link will be located on WSSDA's Legislative Assembly web page: wssda.org/LA along with links to the position proposal submission forms.

MARCH 31

Policy & Coherent Governance Summit

10 a.m.–2 p.m. Ramada Inn, 4520 Martin Way, Olympia, WA. This event aims to help current practitioners of Policy Governance® or Coherent Governance® strengthen their efforts through networking with peers. Seventy spots are available for directors and superintendents from Washington school districts already engaged in one of the two governance models.

APRIL 30

Legislative Positions Proposals Due by 5 p.m.

APRIL 18

Annual Conference Call for Proposals Opens

MAY 21

Annual Conference Registration Opens

MAY 23

Equity Conference

The WSSDA/WASA/AWSP Equity Conference, From the Boardroom to the Classroom, takes place at the DoubleTree SeaTac on **May 23**. Keynote speakers Anthony J. Greenwald, co-author of *Blind Spot: Hidden Biases of Good People* and Robin D'Angelo, Ph.D., author of *White Fragility* and other books on racial and social justice, headline. Registration is now open. Contact jchylinski@wasa-oly.org or 360.943.5717

JUNE 2018

Legislative Assembly Registration and Reservations for Lodging Opens

SEPTEMBER 21 & 22

Legislative Assembly and Pre-Assembly Happening in Spokane at the Davenport Grand Hotel

For the most updated calendar, visit wssda.org.



From the Board President



I attended the concert of a college classmate, TobyMac, the other day and he has a song that says, "You gave me the stars put them out of my reach/Called me to waters a little too deep." In essence, sometimes we find ourselves stretched, asked to go beyond what we think we can do. But, as school board directors, we have as our primary focus the success of our students, and sometimes, that means taking on things bigger than ourselves.

One of the ways we do that is through our advocacy efforts, like convincing the legislators to reconsider how they've met the *McLeary* ruling, asking the Congress to fully fund the Individuals with Disabilities Act, or closer to home, ensuring we are supporting our students equitably, giving them the resources they need to achieve. WSSDA regularly provides opportunities for our members to do just that.

On January 25, WSSDA partnered with Puget Sound ESD to host our sixth racial equity convening focused on racial equity policy.* This year focused on policy implementation. School board directors, superintendents and district staff reflected on how to overcome barriers in their journey to implement their equity policy.

On January 28 and 29, over 500 school directors, business officers, superintendents and students attended the annual Legislative Conference, Hearing from Superintendent Reykdal and the governor on Sunday. They spent Monday with legislators and testifying before education committees.

A week later, over 30 school board directors, plus a few students, met with Congressional members in the nation's capitol. We advocated for IDEA, reauthorization of the Perkins Act, and highlighted how recent tax reform negatively impacts districts' ability to refinance school bonds to save taxpayer dollars.

Today, please take time to reflect on where you can stretch beyond what is comfortable. The students within your district are bound to reap the benefits as you grow in your influence as an elected member of your community.

Marnie Maraldo, WSSDA Board President

*Editor's note: Search #edracepolicy on Twitter
For photos, see bit.ly/EquityCon

Shrinking to grow: preparation underway for a new headquarters

After carefully studying the pros and cons of either relocating, remodeling, or rebuilding, the WSSDA Board made the decision in late 2017 to engage in a design-build process to construct a new headquarters.

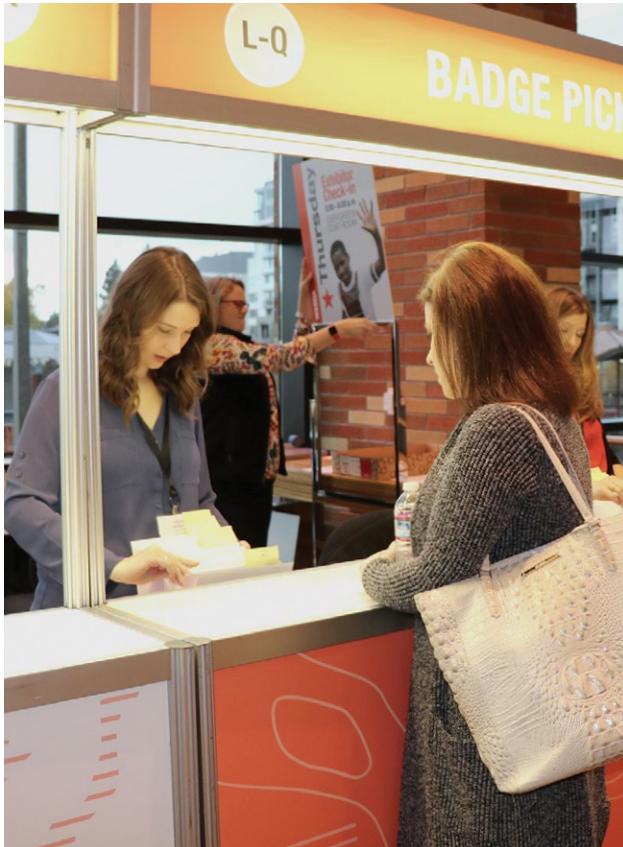
WSSDA is now in the schematic design phase of constructing a new building on its current property in Olympia. This is a project that has been under consideration by the WSSDA Board for several years, stretching as far back as 2001. Built in 1978, WSSDA's office building has outlived its useful lifespan.

With the success of WSSDA's subscription-based services plus thoughtful financial management, no dues-based revenue will be used as part of the construction. By reducing maintenance, eliminating repairs, increasing energy efficiency, and redesigning work and meeting space, multiple efficiencies will be realized.

The new facility will be approximately 25% smaller but will include 75% more meeting space to improve WSSDA's ability to serve as a hub for influencing the course of public education in Washington state.

Historical perspective:

<p>1978 WSSDA building constructed</p> <p>1991 WSSDA purchased existing property and renovated</p> <p>2001 Studied options to sell <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sell and move • Rent and move </p> <p>2004 New septic system installed</p> <p>2005 Converted print shop into the current conference center with kitchen and restrooms</p> <p>2011-13 Studied options for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cosmetic upgrades </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanical systems upgrades • Full modernization • Demolish and rebuild 1 or 2 story • Sell property and lease or buy a new location <p>2016 Explored cohabitation with other educational organizations</p> <p>2017 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final payment on mortgage • Selected OAC Services, Inc. to provide construction management services • Selected partners Big Rock Construction and MSGS Architects to complete a design-build project involving demolition of current building </p>
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Annual Conference: Looking back to see ahead

WSSDA staff takes feedback from members very seriously. We read every evaluation from Annual Conference and use your comments to constantly improve your experience each year. For our November 2017 conference, 94% of all breakout session ratings were either "good" or "excellent." But what did we learn from feedback that will influence our preparation for 2018's conference?

The post-conference surveys tell us that attendees are happiest with sessions that offer clear and replicable solutions. One response suggested asking experts to co-present on the systems, processes, or tools they've implemented that have increased student success. Posting content from presentations is also high on attendees' requests for added value. Variety—both in topics covered and types of school districts that present—is highly valued. This tells us attendees look to the WSSDA Annual Conference for a sense of community and a statewide picture. On the negative side, the survey reveals that attendees pick sessions carefully based on the description and are frustrated if the actual session doesn't match what they read—something event planners continually struggle with since session descriptions are often written far in advance of the conference.

CONTINUED next page

Next steps

With over 900 survey responses, we've combed through a lot of comments. The Annual Conference Committee will take this feedback into consideration as it begins its work with their first meeting on March 10.

How it all comes together

A CONFERENCE PRIMER:

Registration: It seems one WSSDA Annual Conference is just ending when the call for session proposals opens for the next one. The 2018 Call for Proposals opens mid-April and registration is scheduled to open mid-May. Both will be announced online and through email. Registration opens early in the year so districts have the opportunity to register before the summer break, and so WSSDA can turn its attention from this big lift to focus on the many other facets of the conference.

Facilities: In order to secure meeting facilities and hotel rooms for an event of this size, WSSDA must contract out the conference spaces 4–5 years in advance. WSSDA Policy stipulates that the event takes place “alternately on the east and west sides of the Cascade Mountains.” The Wednesday–Saturday schedule on the east side was implemented with member approval when WSSDA discovered we could get large discounts for meeting spaces and attendees’ hotel rooms by shifting the traditional Thursday–Sunday event by one day.

Food: Catering takes up the largest chunk of the conference budget and is constrained by the menu offerings of the event caterer. As tastes and diets have changed over the years, we have moved toward healthier breakfasts with a protein option, more gluten-free meals, and fewer sweets. Posting the menu on our website in advance of the 2017 conference seemed helpful to member satisfaction. Attendees are always encouraged to submit their dietary restrictions, and we ensure those needs are met.

Networking: The social aspect of conference—both time to be with your board and the opportunity to network with like-minded school directors—is eagerly anticipated by many attendees. WSSDA has shortened keynote presentations from 1 hour to 45 minutes to allow for more table-talk during general session luncheons. There is an ongoing effort to find options to effectively balance professional development with social connections and the informal learning that may result from them.

And speaking of learning: One fun way to demonstrate the value of our public schools’ arts programs is to experience the results. By that, we mean the student performances at general sessions of the WSSDA Annual Conference. If you have an idea of who or what you’d like to see this November, please send the idea and contact information to c.lauderdale@wssda.org—preferably with a link so staff can review the submissions.

So now you know how Annual Conference works and some of the things we’re working on to make things better for 2018. Look for our call for session proposals in April!



Spring Regional Meetings

March 1

Mount Vernon, DA 1

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Mount Vernon High School
Library (New Main Building)
314 N 9th Street
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

March 7

Elma, DA 5

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Elma Middle School
Library
805 W Main Street
Elma, WA 98541

March 15

Seattle, DA 2

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Rainier Beach High School
Cafeteria
8815 Seward Park Ave S
Seattle, WA 98118

April 17

White River, DA 3

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
White River High School
Library
26928 120th Street E
Buckley, WA 98321

April 25

Evergreen, DA 6

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Cascadia Tech Academy
12200 NE 28th Street
Vancouver, WA 98682

May 1

Moses Lake, DA 7

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Columbia Basin Technical
Skills Center
900 East Yonezawa Boulevard
Moses Lake, WA 98837

May 2

Mead, DA 9

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Northwood Middle School
Library
12908 N Pittsburg
Spokane, WA 99208

May 3

Pullman, DA 10

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Pullman High School
Community Room
510 NW Greyhound Way
Pullman, WA 99163

May 5

Crescent, DA 4

10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
Crescent School District
Library
50350 Hwy 112
Joyce, WA 98343

May 10

Walla Walla, DA 11

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Walla Walla Public Schools
Anne Golden Boardroom
364 South Park Street
Walla Walla, WA 99362

May 16

Wapato, DA 8

6:00 – 8:30 p.m.
Simcoe Elementary
1307 South Camas Ave
Wapato, WA 98951





Day on the Hill participants with Senator Mark Schoesler as part of the 2018 WASA/WSSDA/WASBO Legislative Conference



500 make annual trek for Legislative Conference and Day on the Hill

On January 28 and 29, over 500 school directors, administrators, and student board representatives descended upon Olympia to have their voices heard during this year's WSSDA/WASA/WASBO Legislative Conference and Day on the Hill. Sunday's conference consisted of presentations by state education leaders, like Superintendent Chris Reykdal and Governor Jay Inslee, plus a panel discussion with leaders of WSSDA, WASA, and WASBO about "hot topics" in K-12 education.

During Monday's Day on the Hill, school district leaders met with 140 legislators to share their experience and input on key issues related to transitioning to the new basic education funding policy, school construction, and assessment graduation requirements. To access materials from this year's conference, visit wssda.org/LegCon.

And, to stay apprised of what's happening in the Legislature related to WSSDA's priorities, keep an eye on our weekly summary at wssda.org/LegUpdates, where you'll also find links to our weekly webinars.



Top: School Director Rob Perkins of Evergreen School District (Vancouver) and colleagues speaking with Representative Monica Jurado Stoner **Second from top:** With Representatives Brad Klippert and Larry Haler **Middle:** A home base for school directors and their district to gather and refresh in between meetings **Above:** Sedro-Woolley school district contingent.



On Call: Know your community

Your school district's success is largely determined by how well you connect with community members and groups. Establishing relationships takes time, effort and research into the hidden corners of your community. Here are some questions to help get started.

Community beliefs: What gives a person status? Consider church attendance, employment, community service, length of residence, family background, and economic success.

Answer the following questions: How do people react to new ideas? Are newcomers well-received by local people? Do people or organizations here cooperate with those of nearby communities?

Traditions: What is the history of the community? How have schools been involved in developing traditions? How is this viewed by the community?

Decision making/leadership: Who are the leaders in the community and how did they attain their status? Who decides the big issues in your community and what process is used?

Physical setting/population data: What is the size of your community? What are the different neighborhoods and what distinguishes them? What are the age groupings in your community? What percent of the population are single-parent families? What percent is foreign-born?

Community economy: Who are the major employers? What are the characteristics of these places of employment and what does that say about the workforce? What is the unemployment rate? What is the per-capita income? What is the tax rate?

Community groups: What are the religious denominations? How many social service agencies are there? Do they adequately meet community needs? What is the form of local government? What is the level and extent of public participation in government decision-making? What health services are available, including public health?



This is an excerpt from the March Issue of *On Call*, a WSSDA subscription publication for school district communications.

PLAY BY PLAY: Wapato Schools Facilities Improvement Journey

by Sean Duke

One could say that quilting is analogous to the work of funding public schools—districts often stitch together resources from a variety of places to make ends meet. As it turns out, the Wapato School District (WPS) is a successful quilter when it comes to facilities.

Over the course of 6 years, WPS patched together more than \$60 million of funding from local, state, and federal sources. “It has been exciting to update our facilities for the Wapato community,” said Wapato Superintendent Becky Imler. “We used an approach to go after every single funding option available, and over time it has paid off.”

It started in 2010 when the district applied for and received a \$3.7 million Federal Impact Aid Construction Grant to build a 10-classroom, state-of-the-art science wing for Wapato High School. The wing contains six typical classrooms and four science lab rooms with enough room for a regular classroom setting plus a science lab.

As a requirement of receiving the grant, an alternative, modular construction process had to be used. When the new science wing was assembled, it was a stand alone building on the Wapato High School campus. The district received the grant in the spring of 2010; design work began immediately; construction followed, and the science wing was finished and dedicated in the spring of 2012.

“ We used an approach to go after every single funding option available, and over time it has paid off. ” – Wapato Superintendent Becky Imler

Since this was a federal grant, there was no cost to the Wapato School District taxpayers.

After receiving the grant for the science wing, the district decided to run a bond election in hopes of replacing most of Wapato High School and modernizing a small portion of the existing building. The bond election took place in February of 2011. The district asked voters to approve a \$20 million bond. As you may know, bond elections need a 60% super majority to pass, and Wapato School District voters approved the bond with a 67% yes vote.

Passing the \$20 million bond qualified the district for approximately \$23 million in state school construction matching money. The citizens’ committee that had formed to promote the bond heavily messaged the fact that the district had previously saved local taxpayers \$3.7 million by successfully applying for the federal grant to build the science wing at Wapato High School. Additionally, they promoted the fact that the district would receive more in state matching money than what the district was asking voters to approve for the bond.

Apparently, all of this messaging helped citizens conclude that the district was not only a good shepherd of public funds, but also proactive in seeking resources beyond its own electorate. Right after

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By the Numbers

**\$60
MILLION**

**6
YEARS**

**35
ROOMS**

**2
SCHOOLS**

“Keeping our legislators aware of what’s going on has played a large role in what we’ve been able to accomplish.” - Mike Balmelli, community relations, Wapato Public Schools

CONTINUED FROM previous page

the voters approved the bond, design on the new high school began, and it was dedicated in the fall of 2014.

From high school to elementary

When the Legislature passed a new law requiring smaller class sizes in grades K–3, the district had some concerns about where it was going to find the space necessary to accommodate the need for more classrooms. District leadership was having ongoing discussions with state legislators from the area, plus other key legislative leaders in the state about the need for more facilities.

“Over the last eight years, our district worked on building relationships with locally elected officials,” said Mike Balmelli, community relations officer for Wapato Public Schools. “Among them, we interact with about six legislators on a regular basis. I think keeping our legislators aware of what’s going on has played a large role in what we’ve been able to accomplish.”

Increasing commitment to diminishing class size

In 2016, state officials invited Wapato to participate in a pilot project aimed at finding a solution for addressing the need for more school facilities brought about by the K–3 class-size law.

Wapato joined the pilot project along with four other school districts from around the state. Each district was to receive four elementary school classrooms built using an alternative construction process called Cross-laminated Timber (CLT). The reason it was a pilot project is that the state wanted to see if this type of construction might provide a cheaper, yet quality construction alternative that also provided benefits for the environment.

WSD chose to locate the additional classrooms at Adams Elementary School. Since this was a state project run by the Department of Enterprise Services, district involvement was mainly providing the

site plus some design input so that the exterior matched the existing Adams Elementary School as much as possible. The project started in the fall of 2016, was completed in the summer, and dedicated in June of 2017. Again, Wapato was able to expand facilities at no cost to local taxpayers.

A new elementary school

In 2015, the state created the K–3 Class Size Reduction Grant Program to address the need for more facilities statewide to accommodate lower class sizes. When WPS learned about the program, the district wasted little time beginning the application process.

Part of the process involved the state doing a site survey of current facilities. To qualify, districts also had to have a shovel-ready site; it just so happened Wapato had a vacant piece of ground that fit the new school quite well. When all was said and done, it was determined that Wapato qualified for 21 classrooms. “When the grant awards were announced in the spring of 2016, we were ecstatic to learn we had been awarded \$13.7 million,” said Balmelli. “We’re using those funds to build a new 21-classroom elementary school.”

That grant allowed Wapato to go from three elementary schools to four. The new school, named Simcoe Elementary, is currently under construction and scheduled to open at the start of the 2018–2019 school year. This entire new school is another addition to district facilities built without any additional cost to Wapato’s taxpayers.

Despite all of its success, the Wapato School District is not resting on its laurels. “We’re not done yet,” said Superintendent Imler. “We are looking for that next opportunity to continue our Board’s goals to update facilities.”

Special thanks to Wapato’s Community Relations Coordinator Mike Balmelli for providing images, quotes and information for this article.



Key take-aways from Wapato

1. Establish on-going relationships with your legislators
2. Look for federal grants
3. Look for state matching dollars
4. Keep an eye out for pilot programs at any level
5. Show the community you’re proactive to acquire funding
6. Let voters know when you’ve saved them money or amplified their investment

3
GRANTS **1**
BOND **67%**
YES VOTE



How to get involved with setting WSSDA's legislative platform

About the process

The cycle begins each February when WSSDA's Legislative Committee begins to review current positions for consolidation and revision. The committee also solicits proposals to establish new, or preserve existing, positions. This year's solicitation window is March 15–April 30. WSSDA's Legislative Committee brings together the top legislative priorities, as voted on at the assembly, and recommends a comprehensive legislative platform subject to final approval by the WSSDA Board of Directors.

Where you come in

- **Attend** both the Legislative Assembly Pre-assembly and the Legislative Assembly, September 21–22. Every school board can send a delegate to participate in the assembly, regardless of whether your board submits a position proposal. An informational webinar is available to familiarize you with the process.

- **Review** WSSDA's 2018 Legislative Positions with your board at: wssda.org/positions. Discuss ideas for refinement, identify positions you'd like to see continue, and look for gaps in the positions regarding issues important to your board.

- **Work** with your board (and others) to consider submitting a new or continuing position. Note that collaboration is highly encouraged. Sometimes more than one district has a similar issue they wish to address, so it is not uncommon for districts to come together in submitting a collective proposal.

- **Submit** a proposal for consideration. In order to be considered as part of the suite of 2019 legislative positions, new and continuing positions must be submitted for review to the Legislative Committee by April 30.

To learn more, visit wssda.org/LA.

LEGISLATOR SPOTLIGHT



REPRESENTATIVE NORMA SMITH

10TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Representative Smith was elected to the Washington State House of Representatives in 2008 to represent the 10th Legislative District consisting of Whidbey and Camano Islands, and nearby communities. Prior to her election, she served on the South Whidbey School District Board from 1991–1995. Rep. Smith serves as the Ranking Member on the House Technology and Economic Development Committee, and as assistant ranking member on the House Capital Budget Committee. She lives in Clinton on Whidbey Island and is active with her family and in her community and church.



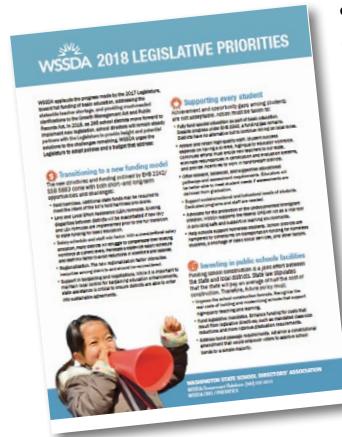
SENATOR BRAD HAWKINS

12TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

Senator Hawkins was elected to the Washington State House of Representatives in 2012 and to the state Senate in 2016 to represent the 12th Legislative District near Wenatchee. Prior to his election to the House, he served for 10 years on the Eastmont School District Board and on the board of the North Central Educational Service District. Senator Hawkins serves as a member of the Senate's Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee, the Energy, Environment & Technology Committee, and is the ranking member on the Senate Higher Education & Workforce Development Committee. He and his wife live in East Wenatchee and have two boys in elementary school.

What insights do these school directors, turned legislators, have to share with us?

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Q: How did your experience as a school board member prepare you for the state Legislature, especially in shaping your views on education?

NS: There are two experiences that have had the greatest impact on my views. The first would be the great joy of being a mother to four children educated in our public school system; the second, my service as a school board director. Both roles give me the perspective necessary to guide me as we deliberate solutions to the McCleary decision, looking at ways to lessen the burden on local districts to pay for basic education, while still maintaining a level of local control which I believe is necessary to serve each unique community and individual learning styles of children. Serving as a school board member provided a foundation of insight into how our districts develop and manage budgets and the importance of planning for the future. For years, I was part of this process, which gave me an appreciation for the complexities and challenges faced by school districts statewide.

BH: Serving as a school board member is a complex and challenging job, but it prepared me well for the Legislature, especially since the state spends half of its \$44 billion budget on education. Serving in the Legislature can be a difficult job, no doubt, but nothing compares to surviving a contentious school board meeting. If you've done that, you can do anything.

“Serving in the Legislature can be a difficult job, no doubt, but nothing compares to surviving a contentious school board meeting. If you've done that, you can do anything.”

– SEN. BRAD HAWKINS

Q: What advice would you give school boards and directors as they navigate the new policies and funding passed in 2017?

NS: The legislation that passed marked the most significant reform in our K-12 education system in decades. As is often the case with sweeping policy changes, not everything will be perfect right out of the gate, and there may be challenges. But please know there were many legislators in Olympia who worked tirelessly to craft a responsible and sustainable solution that would give each child in Washington state the best education possible, regardless of their ZIP code. Also know that many, including myself, are fully committed to continuing to come together in a bipartisan way to make improvements. If there are unintended, negative consequences, or if you need clarification, my best advice would be to contact your legislator and ask to meet with them. WSSDA, as a statewide organization, can play a vital role in drawing legislative attention to issues that you've determined require legislative action.

BH: My advice would be to stay optimistic. Many of my school board years were during tough economic times. State revenues were down, and those budgets were terrible for education. The recent

2017-19 budget leveraged state revenue growth and focused on reforms that were long overdue. While it might not be perfect for all 295 different school districts, the Legislature convenes each year and will have opportunities to make adjustments.

Q: What short- and longer-term goals do you have that you'd like support from school boards and districts to accomplish?

NS: Short-term, I would like continued feedback on the implementation and foreseeable challenges and/or opportunities resulting from the McCleary solution passed this year. It is important we get this right, and the time to address major issues for school districts is now.

For the long term, I want to continue hearing from districts on how we can reduce the burdens placed on you by the state, itself. One of the most common concerns I hear from board directors, administrators and teachers is that of the “moving target.” New requirements, changing requirements and mandates (both funded and unfunded) create additional work and stress on our districts. I would like to keep working to rein this issue in. I want teachers and supporters of our educational goals to have more time to create lifelong learners while experiencing the joy of discovery with our students.

BH: In the short term, I think it is very important for school boards and districts to stay in close communication with their legislators. This continual dialog will be incredibly helpful as lawmakers make any adjustments to the budget and in the long term for education policy.

Q: How do you maintain a healthy balance between family and homelife, service within your community, and your legislative role?

NS: I do my best to remember what is truly important: to love well, to be thankful and kind, to share life and faith, to be an encouragement to others, and to work both hard and creatively. My love of God and my family weaves throughout my work and life. With that in mind, I work within my legislative calendar to the best of my ability, prioritizing the many meetings that need to take place and then blocking time for family, relationships and hopefully some quiet. People often forget that we are a part-time citizen legislature, but I can tell you it rarely feels that way because there are so many worthy causes to pursue, so many people whose stories I want to hear, and sessions that rarely end on time. At the end of the day, I give my very best to represent the people of the 10th District and our state in Olympia as they've elected me to do.

BH: It can be difficult, but I am thankful that my wife is so supportive. I try very hard to maintain a balance that honors both my family and my district. I guess I've had lots of practice throughout my 16 years of public service. I even find time for hot yoga, which helps me keep my head clear.

“Serving as a school board member provided a foundation of insight into how our districts develop and manage budgets and the importance of planning for the future.”

– REP. NORMA SMITH

Does your policy manual reflect your board's vision?

Now is a good time to review

by Abigail Westbrook

All things change; policy is no exception. Historically, school boards could adopt or institute only those policies and programs specifically authorized by the state. However, in 1992, the Legislature removed that restriction, allowing school boards to revise and adopt written policies to promote effective, efficient, or safe public school operation so long as those policies did not conflict with state laws. This marked an important change, giving local school boards an active role in defining a vision for their district through policy.

Although policy review and revision might sometimes feel mundane, it is actually a valuable opportunity to inject the board's leadership, priorities, resources, needs, and mandates into the district's governing structure. The review process also includes review of policy implementation, even though superintendents and other school administrators are at the forefront of developing and implementing the procedures.

Your superintendent, administrators, and other staff should provide the board with periodic reports on the implementation and outcomes of policy and procedure so that the board can monitor whether implementation reflects the board's vision. You probably expect that your active leadership will be needed when addressing complex or controversial topics, but it is also needed to assess whether there have been, or might be, unintended consequences of policy and procedure. Sometimes, the devil is in the details.

A timely example of the importance of the board's active review and leadership role is a review of Procedure 3231P, Student Records, which WSSDA recently revised. WSSDA's revision clarified that the board has discretion when designating the types of information from student records that will be classified as "directory information." Directory information can include students' names, dates of attendance, participation in activities and sports, awards received, and several other pieces of information. Although parents have the opportunity to opt their student out of directory information at the beginning of the year, directory information is otherwise readily available without need of prior parent permission. The information you designate is open for use in publications such as the honor roll, graduation programs, the yearbook, and sports activity sheets.

“...your school board can *but does not have to* designate a student's address, telephone number, photograph, or place of birth as directory information.”

Directory information is also readily available for use in local newspapers, including the school sports pages, and articles regarding student projects, public service, and awards.

A key part of the concept behind directory information is that it is considered useful to the community, commonplace, and innocuous, comparable to the information in telephone books available in every telephone booth of yesteryear. But, like the prevalence of telephone books and booths, things change, including the analysis of what we assume is harmless.

Directory information is available to the public regardless of whether the news is favorable or the reporting is accurate. Moreover, "available to the public" also means available to persons who might be stalkers, child predators, parents with restricted rights, or even federal authorities.

“...your role as school board directors is to weigh the potential benefit (if any) of designating a student's place of birth as directory information, against the potential detriment...”

Please note that your school board can, *but does not have to*, designate a student's address, telephone number, photograph, or place of birth as directory information. In this matter, your role as school board directors is to weigh the potential benefit (if any) of designating a student's place of birth as directory information, against the potential detriment of use and misuse of that same information. Then, repeat the process for each type of student information that could be designated as directory information (i.e., student's address, telephone number, photograph, etc.), balancing the potential usefulness with the potential harm in today's world.

Washington's school boards now have decision-making discretion that they did not always have, which is good because public education has new challenges. Use that discretion to ensure your district is on course. Embrace policy review as the time to use today's challenges as an opportunity to customize and adopt policies to reflect the board's vision for public education in your community.

The above is an extension of information presented in the latest issue of WSSDA's subscription publication *Policy & Legal News (PLN)*. PLN is the vehicle through which WSSDA updates its Model Policy Manual alerting districts to critical shifts in school law. To learn more, call 360-252-3018.



Kent Prairie Elementary students travel to the sun

Kent Prairie Elementary students experienced what it's like to see a tornado and travel to the sun using Google's augmented reality technology. A Google for Education representative visited the school on Feb. 9 and let the students engage with three-dimensional objects that were placed around the school. Using a smart phone, students could walk around various objects like a lobster, tornado and planet and actually enter them.

"There were so many things to see that I hadn't seen before," said first-grader Parker Howatson. "I was inside the Earth!"

Kindergarten teacher Nikki Brooks applied to have Google bring this technology to the school for the day. There's a possibility that

in the future, teachers might be able to create their own content to further student learning.

"If you're studying a unit about dinosaurs, you could use augmented reality to bring the dinosaurs to life so students could see first-hand how the dinosaurs moved and interacted," said Brooks. "This really helps to keep students excited about lessons and furthers their engagement."

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This story and many more can be found at ourkids-swa.com. Let districts statewide see your good news by sending it to s.duke@wssda.org.



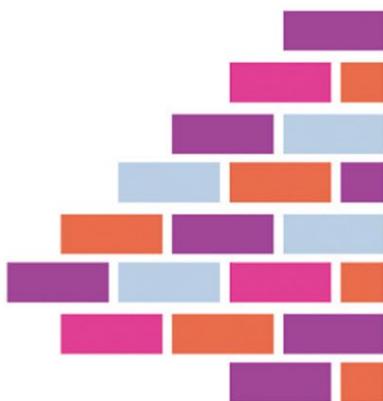
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direct

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

WSSDA Direct is evolving. It is our hope that it will grow into a platform that helps school directors share their knowledge, experience and perspective with each other. In this way, it can become a resource that will inform and reflect the work of Washington's school boards. Direct will be published quarterly. The views expressed by individual authors do not necessarily represent WSSDA policies or positions. If you have a disability and need this publication in an alternative format, please contact our Communications Department.

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From the Our Kids, Our Future website, Kent Prairie Elementary students test out Google's augmented reality technology.