



Washington State School Directors' Association  
Annual Report  
for the Year 2010



## President's Perspective ~ 2010 in Review

by Kevin Laverty



Every year WSSDA faces challenges to its mission and our members typically rise to the occasion. Whether it is a year of mischief-making by others—the school district consolidation bill that seemed to come from out of the air in the Legislature, or staying on top of pressing issues like high school graduation rates and adapting to new testing requirements from OSPI, we stay focused and on task.

In the midst of all this, the organization had to step up its game to keep ahead of prospective changes which included, first and foremost, hiring a new executive director. WSSDA fully represents and reflects our state in its membership and, sometimes, it's difficult to keep us all marching in the same direction. We come from different places, perspectives and experiences. Fortunately, we are all on the same page when it comes to what's right for students in our schools. If I didn't know it already, I learned quickly of the commitment so many of you have that is well beyond just showing up at your local school board or WSSDA meetings.

There are too many to name in the space I have here, but know that our organization could not have made it through 2010 without your support and continued focus on what is in the best interest of our districts and students. There are several areas I homed in on to improve our organizational effectiveness.

After I was elected, I had to quickly determine where we were and where we needed to go. The first area that needed to be addressed stood out—to put a revamped WSSDA website and supporting technologies in place for the future. It wasn't rocket science nor was it just my idea—I simply continued the work of the technology task force from the previous year with an eye toward better member service.

Second, it seemed we had lost our footing with mid-sized and large school district members in providing a value-added proposition to them. They needed to be able to come together to work on issues that we may all face but also include the factors of scale and complex relationships with other governing bodies and community groups. As a result, the board began a dialogue with those districts and some from the business community who are tasked to promote school reform and improved student achievement. The result is that the board agreed to establish an urban-suburban task force that I believe is important to the long-term needs of our organization.

Finally, board members brought forth some changes to the WSSDA organizational structure that were approved by the Delegate Assembly at the Annual Conference. The most notable of these were term limits for WSSDA board members and the extension of voting for officers to the entire membership regardless of whether or not a member attends the Annual Conference.

I want to especially thank the 2010 board of directors for their work, passion and commitment to the mission of our association. Likewise, our committees, task forces and the highly reliable WSSDA staff didn't skip a beat even as we were in the process of hiring a new leader—for that, I will be eternally grateful. It was, by any measure, a successful year and you have yourselves to thank for it!





## From the Executive Director

by Dr. Jonelle Adams



In my first six months as WSSDA's new executive director I have been inspired by the work that has been achieved at WSSDA and the work that still needs to be done. I believe this is the right time and the right place for me to express my passion for public education. Throughout these first months, I've met so many of you, heard what is happening in your districts, and learned how much you care about helping all students achieve at high levels. I am dedicated to helping WSSDA stay on the path you have established before us: to bring focus, strategy, and resources to improving student learning.

Our core mission is to ensure school directors have the tools, services and support needed to lead effectively. Our challenge is to grow WSSDA's credibility and reputation as the "go-to" organization for expertise and advocacy on K-12 issues. WSSDA must be at the table as critical decisions are made about the ways our schools are governed, funded and administered.

In 2010 your WSSDA Board of Directors began its focus on developing intentional board practices that would strengthen it as an exceptional leadership team by focusing on the current research from *Board Source: Twelve Principles of Governance that Power Exceptional Boards*. WSSDA also began to revamp its programs and services, according to research-based practices, to ensure they support your efforts to improve student achievement. For example, WSSDA's curricula and training programs were overhauled to reflect the new Washington School Board Standards. An online self-assessment tool is being developed to help boards examine their own operations and strategize for improvement. The Washington Lighthouse Project engaged WSSDA and ten school districts in 2010. More research capabilities were brought to members through policy analysis, issue briefs, and best practices to improve student achievement.

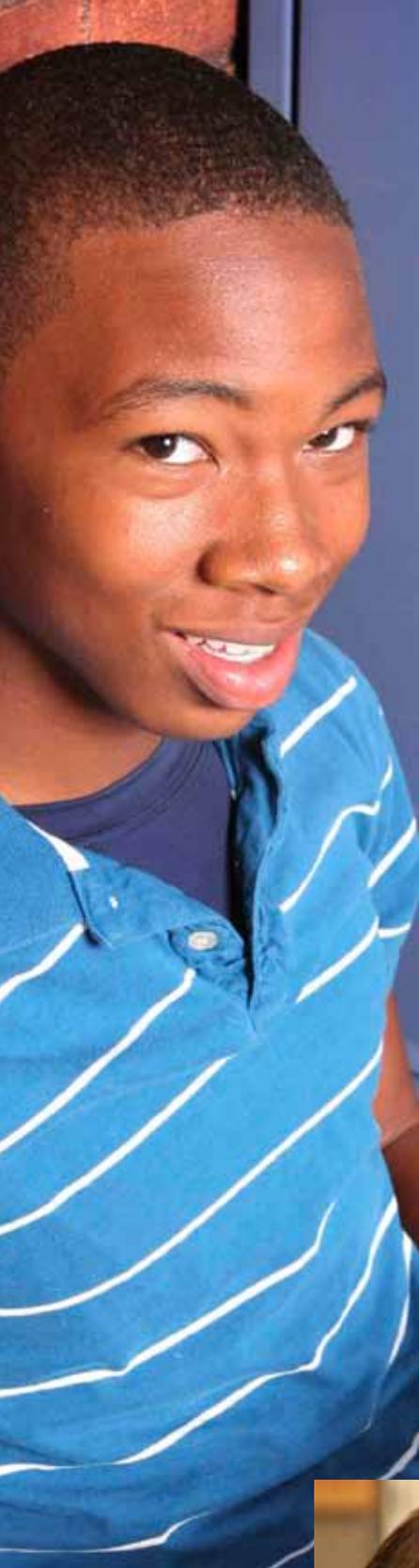
WSSDA invested in a new website to utilize today's technology to assure members have the resources they need. Increased use of webinars, online training, and social media were employed as well; we "Tweeted" the news to you as it happened!

Collaboration with regional and national partners enhanced board governance research to support your work in your districts. For example, The Lighthouse Project was accomplished in cooperation with the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Grants and other non-dues revenues were aggressively pursued to build programs and services; one such example was the Stuart Foundation's support of the online board self-assessment.

I will make certain that WSSDA is a highly visible advocate for public education in the years ahead. School directors will be at the table with all stakeholders to move school reform forward—without loss of local control. Education reform, in fact, *begins* at the local level with strong, engaged and informed school boards who set clear expectations and create the conditions wherein students can succeed, achievement gaps can be closed, and dropout rates diminish.

My staff and I are deeply committed to ensuring the dollars you invest in WSSDA are returned to you in quality, value-added services. We are here for you. Thank you so much for your school board service.





## The year in review

*The year 2010 brought deepening economic uncertainty, making the role of school governance increasingly crucial. While Washington's 1,477 publicly elected school directors oversaw shrinking budgets coupled with higher expectations for student learning, it was clear that school board members needed training, advocacy, information and policy resources more than ever.*

In January WSSDA began a year marked by transition with the establishment of a committee to search for a new executive director. Focusing on finding a leader to bring the association greater visibility and secure new revenue sources, a thorough search process identified Dr. Jonelle Adams—an experienced teacher, grant writer, school reform and professional development leader, who was currently serving as executive director of the Washington Alliance for Better Schools. Adams joined the WSSDA staff in July.

WSSDA maintained a continuous presence at the Capitol and throughout 2010's "short session," providing daily and weekly legislative updates to members. A touchstone event occurred in February when King County Superior Court Judge John Erlick ruled that the state is failing to meet its constitutional "paramount duty" to provide ample funding for schools. WSSDA's focus for the 2010 legislative session was on the full implementation of education funding reform. Ultimately, much of the Legislature's action was specifically designed to enhance the state's Race to the Top application. Though the application failed, the reforms enacted are ongoing.

In another key transition for WSSDA, Marie Sullivan came on board as the association's Governmental Relations Director, hitting the ground running during September's Legislative Assembly. Sullivan has a wealth of experience in our state's legislative arena, and has maintained WSSDA's strong presence "on the Hill." Her efforts helped delineate the Legislative Committee's 2011 priorities: maintaining Local Effort Assistance, opposing unfunded mandates, implementation of basic education funding, and opposing forced consolidation of school districts.

Leadership training is crucial during hard economic times, because missteps made by boards can be costly. The Washington School Board Standards, developed the previous year by WSSDA's Board Standards Task Force, provided the basis for new programming in WSSDA Leadership Development Services in 2010. The Washington Lighthouse Project continued to deliver training based on the demonstrated link between school board leadership and student learning. An interagency agreement with OSPI supports Lighthouse training for school boards whose districts are in improvement status. Many other workshops were provided to boards, individually and regionally, both by WSSDA staff and by its training cadre.

School board members left November's Annual Conference in Spokane "powered up" after upgrading their governance skills and networking on key issues. The fifth class of Leadership WSSDA graduated during the conference, and 2011's class was recruited. Spring 2010 Regional Meetings were energetic and well attended in twelve locations statewide, and Fall Regional Meetings gave many members their first opportunity to meet WSSDA's new executive director.

When WSSDA was established as a state agency in 1947, it became the primary entity for school policy development. In 2010 WSSDA's Policy and Legal Services carried out this key function, writing numerous model policies including a new





## The year in review

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harassment, intimidation and bullying policy—a collaboration with OSPI. WSSDA created a telecommunications devices policy, a policy to prohibit sexting, and a competency-based credits policy in collaboration with SBE and OSPI.

WSSDA's legal staff wrote an amicus brief regarding math curriculum selection in the Seattle School District; expanded WSSDA policy services to school districts to include an audit option and a policy manual maintenance service; and continued to serve as the coordinating agency for the association of attorneys who represent school districts.

WSSDA members often speak of the excellent help readily available through Policy and Legal Services staff. Inquiries from school directors, superintendents, principals, district staff, ESDs, parents and the media are researched and promptly responded to by staff who provide references to relevant state and federal laws and court decisions. In 2010 the department began recruiting an education research analyst to further enhance these services to members.

The WSSDA Urban-Suburban Schools Issues Task Force was created in 2010, and held their first meeting in November. The WSSDA Trust Lands Task Force closely monitored Department of Natural Resources legislation that would undermine trust resources. The Task Force on Small Schools Issues developed Annual Conference sessions, facilitated WSSDA visits to small districts; and worked to ensure that the concerns of small and remote districts are considered in all educational policy decisions.

WSSDA's 2010 delegation to the Federal Relations Network met with our state's Congressional delegation and staff of the U.S. Department of Education in the nation's capital, discussing NCLB changes and the competitive grant program Race to the Top. WSSDA maintained representation on the National School Boards Association's Board of Directors and the NSBA Policies, Beliefs and Resolutions Committee.

In addition to the WSSDA Board of Directors, 23 school districts now subscribe to BoardDocs. The resulting paperless meetings bring speed and agility to conducting board business, and greater transparency for the communities served. BoardDocs continues to be promoted as a source of association revenue.

WSSDA's communications team expanded technology use through streaming video, podcasts, online meetings, an online annual report, and recently launched a blog entitled "First Reading" for rapid updates on legislative issues. Hot-button items are quickly transmitted to WSSDA members who use Facebook and Twitter. A significant investment in time and resources was made to bring WSSDA's website up to current standards and capabilities, increasing its value to members. Focus groups were held, the website was "test-driven" by Annual Conference participants, and the new website is set for launch by July 1, 2011.



*Locally elected school boards are at the heart of public education and are at the grassroots level of a functioning democracy. Since 1922, WSSDA has assisted school board members who generously volunteer to serve in this capacity.*

*WSSDA brings enormous value to Washington school districts. The accomplishments of 2010 were possible because passionate and hardworking association members collaborated despite widely diverse concerns. Together with staff, the WSSDA Board of Directors led with intelligence, foresight and energy, championing the mission of helping school directors provide every student with the tools for success in life, career, and a future we can barely imagine today.*





## WSSDA • Condensed Comparative Statement of Net Assets For the Year Ended December 31, 2010

	2010	2009	Increase (Decrease)
<b>Assets</b>			
Current assets	\$1,121,809	\$894,313	\$227,496
Capital assets, net of depreciation	<u>1,337,241</u>	<u>1,378,312</u>	<u>(41,071)</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>	2,459,050	2,272,625	186,425
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Current liabilities	171,842	99,258	72,584
Long-term liabilities:			
Compensated absences	137,304	121,055	16,249
Mortgage payable	<u>555,000</u>	<u>620,000</u>	<u>(65,000)</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	864,146	840,313	23,833
<b>Net Assets</b>			
Invested in capital assets, net of related debt	644,937	637,257	7,680
Restricted	84,602	34,602	50,000
Unrestricted	<u>865,365</u>	<u>760,453</u>	<u>104,912</u>
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>\$1,594,904</b>	<b>\$1,432,312</b>	<b>\$162,592</b>

Current assets consist primarily of cash, investments, and receivables.

## Finance Report

WSSDA ended the 2010 fiscal year with an excess of revenue over expenditures of \$154,911. The general fund balance at the end of 2010 was \$949,969 compared to \$795,058 in 2009. This represents WSSDA's net resources available (within limits by policy) for operations in 2011.

## Financial statements

The financial statements for WSSDA have been prepared in conformity with generally accepted accounting principals (GAAP). A Statement of Net Assets and a Statement of Activities are the primary financial reporting instruments of WSSDA.

The financial report above is a condensed summary of the Statement of Net Assets as of December 31, 2010. This financial statement presents information focusing on assets and liabilities, with the difference between the two reported as "net assets." The net assets category provides a broad overview of the association finances. Net assets serve over time as a useful indicator of WSSDA's financial position. WSSDA's net assets total \$1,594,904 in 2010 compared to \$1,432,312 in 2009. This is an increase of \$162,592 or 11.4 percent. The net increase is reflective of additional assets of \$186,425 and a decrease in liabilities of \$148,009.

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## WSSDA • Statement of Activities For the Year Ended December 31, 2010

Description	Governmental Activities 2010	Governmental Activities 2009
<b>Expenses</b>		
Current by program		
Association Services	1,005,269	\$894,182
Less capital asset outlays	(8,374)	(20,772)
Less principal payment on mortgage	(65,000)	(65,000)
Plus disposals (net book value)	18,600	17,059
Plus depreciation expense	30,844	32,728
Plus increase in compensated absences liability	<u>16,249</u>	<u>(19,305)</u>
	997,588	838,892
Policy & Legal Services	465,314	440,092
Governmental Relations	274,462	273,358
Board Development & Training	400,629	371,328
Annual Conference	376,692	402,649
Communications & Marketing	<u>241,537</u>	<u>283,179</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>2,756,222</b>	<b>\$2,609,498</b>
<b>Program Revenues</b>		
Association Services	1,748,974	1,676,395
Policy & Legal Services	433,072	388,009
Governmental Relations	52,992	51,015
Board Development & Training	167,455	82,622
Annual Conference	432,545	400,823
Communications & Marketing	<u>48,080</u>	<u>56,896</u>
<b>Total Program Revenues</b>	<b>2,883,118</b>	<b>2,655,760</b>
<b>Grant Revenue</b>		
<b>Other Revenue</b>		
Interest income	26,446	42,254
Rental income	350	16,857
Other income	<u>8,900</u>	<u>9,260</u>
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	35,696	68,371
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>2,918,814</b>	<b>2,724,131</b>
<b>Excess (Deficiency) of Revenues over Expenses</b>	<b>162,592</b>	<b>114,633</b>
<b>Changes in Net Assets</b>		
Beginning	1,432,312	1,317,679
<b>Ending</b>	<b>\$1,594,904</b>	<b>\$1,432,312</b>



### Financial statements (continued)

The Statement of Activities above presents information showing changes in WSSDA's net assets during 2010 and focuses on association revenue and expense activity, with the difference between the two reported as excess (or deficiency) of revenues over expenses. The December 31, 2010 statement shows an excess of revenue over expenses of \$162,592 for a total of \$1,594,904 and corresponds to the total net assets (assets less liabilities) on the Statement of Assets.





*The Washington State School Directors' Association provides leadership, advocacy, and services to support public school directors' efforts to improve student learning.*

## **2010 WSSDA Officers and Board of Directors**

President | Kevin Lavery (Mukilteo)

President-elect | Deborah Heart (Goldendale)

Vice President | Mary Fertakis (Tukwila)

DA 1 Roger Myers (Stanwood-Camano)

DA 2 Craig Schumaker (Auburn)

DA 2 Carol Van Noy (Riverview)

DA 3 Rick Maloney (University Place)

DA 4 Chris Stokke (Central Kitsap)

DA 5 Chuck Namit (North Thurston)

DA 6 Roy Parsons (Kelso)

DA 7 Tracy Zahn (Bridgeport)

DA 8 Miguel Puente (Sunnyside)

DA 9 Andy James (Onion Creek)

DA 10 Dean Kinzer (Pullman)

DA 11 Kay Brader (Prosser)

Past President | Martha Rice (Yakima)

NSBA Board of Directors | Anne Golden (Walla Walla)



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