



WSSDA

direct

QUARTERLY NEWSMAGAZINE

WINTER 2021

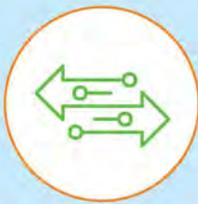


from Vision to Reality

How the Wapato board turned a thought into something real for Native students, p.14; WSSDA turns 100, p.6; With new responsibilities come new opportunities, p.8; New board members: where to start?, p.5; Honoring a departed hero, p.6; Rising stars, p.7; And more!

The Math Divide

Adaptive practice to measure and support student motivation and math growth



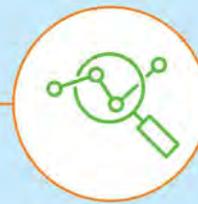
Differentiated

Continuously adapts for student practice in math or ELA activities, while offering teachers the ability to focus practice on grade-level standards.



Engaging

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Produced quarterly by



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Strengthening our connections

My favorite quote in this issue of *Direct* is “it’s all about relationships.” On page 17, Tavis Peterson, assistant superintendent for Wapato School District, said that’s how we can succeed in supporting the students and families in our communities. I think that’s true about almost every aspect of our lives, so I’m grateful for Tavis reminding us.

Building relationships is key to forming a successful board-superintendent team and just plain making us happy, healthy people. (See page 10 for a few research-based tips for promoting your happiness.) Relationship-building is key to our success as we work through difficult decision-making and keep our communities engaged in productive ways.

Finding ways to connect and remember the things we have in common can be an antidote to some of the challenges we face today. Maybe you do that within your board; maybe you do it at home or work, but I’m sure it will benefit all of us wherever you do it.

As leaders, it’s your role to guide your community toward success. But as we learn in Board Boot Camp, no one individual has the authority, nor the capacity, to do it alone. That’s why I want to remind all of us to heed Tavis’ words. Let’s focus on finding ways to strengthen our connections with each other.

Here at WSSDA, your staff is laser-focused on doing everything we can to assist you in your role. We recognize that different communities, districts, and boards are all unique. Wherever you are, we will meet you there and do our best to provide support.

In conclusion, I’d like to draw inspiration from our dear friend and 2021 Hero in Education, Brian Sims (see page 6). Brian succeeded at working with people on all sides of an issue to help find solutions and craft legislation. In his tribute, Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt explained how Brian did that: “You have to understand people, understand their needs, be pragmatic. You have to be non-partisan in a very partisan environment.” That’s what Brian did, and that’s what I pledge to do for all of you.

Please enjoy our latest issue of *Direct*.

Tim Garchow, WSSDA Executive Director



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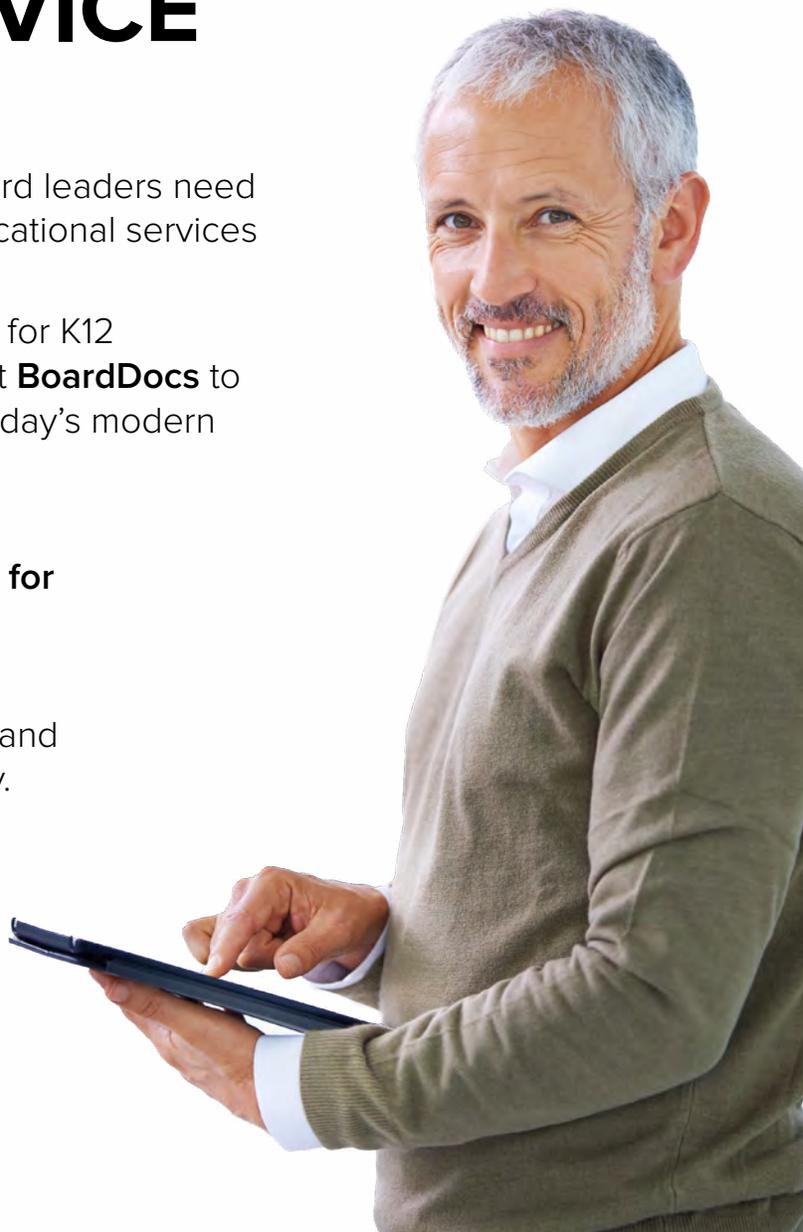
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From the Board President



Hello, fellow School Board Directors!

It's my privilege and honor to serve as your WSSDA President for 2022, and I am genuinely optimistic for the coming year. I'm currently in my 15th year serving on my local board, and the last two have easily been the most challenging. We've learned a lot, and we've adapted to our current environment to continue educating our kids. Has it been perfect? Of course not, but I'm so proud of how we have all stepped up to find creative ways to make it happen.

By now, many of our newest school directors have been sworn in and attended their first meeting. I encourage you to work closely together as a board/superintendent team and focus on what's most important: delivering a top-quality education to the students and families you serve.

I'm sure your first few months will be eye-opening. You'll learn what we can control and what we cannot. You will sometimes disagree with your fellow board members, and that's okay. The important thing is that these discussions be civil, because I truly believe that we all want what's best for our kids, our staff, and our communities.

I was so inspired by our WSSDA Annual Conference in November. I can't even begin to tell you how amazing it was, for me personally, to stand on the stage and look out at hundreds of you in person for the first time in nearly two years! Much of the energy was due to the amazing speakers, but I felt like a lot of it was just being together again.

Moving forward, we are quickly approaching our annual Legislative Conference on January 30, which is followed by our "Week on the Hill." During that week, we'll meet with our legislators to deepen our relationships and highlight our legislative priorities. I hope you've already signed up for this important event.

Thank you for taking the time to read my president's message. I look forward to working with all of you in 2022.

Danny Edwards, WSSDA Board President

Leadership Development –Tricia Lubach

After a tumultuous year capped by school board elections unlike any other year, we hope the quiet of winter brings a welcome opportunity for reflection and renewal. As the holidays give way to January, consider where you hope to learn, stretch and grow in 2022. WSSDA has a wide range of options to meet the needs of all school directors in the year ahead. For new directors who missed Board Boot Camp at Annual Conference, don't miss this vital training offered in January through March across the state. The OnBoard Introduction to Educational Equity learning experience will also be available statewide. For experienced school board members, Leadership WSSDA is an unmatched professional development experience. Applications will be open on WSSDA's website until mid-January. Wherever you are on your learning journey, WSSDA has options for you.

Strategic Advocacy –Marissa Rathbone

Over the past 20 plus months, our K-12 system has taken on enormous responsibilities, unlike in any years previously. We know this has come at an immense cost to your districts – financially and emotionally. WSSDA is working tirelessly on your behalf to mitigate those challenges by advocating for the resources you need during the 2022 legislative session. But, for us to be successful, we need you to give legislators your stories, data, and actual costs for delivering services. Increasingly, we've noticed legislators wanting to know the financial facts of districts, so being prepared to share actual costs is important. Learn more about how to advocate effectively by joining our webinars and our legislative updates email list at wssda.org/lists.

Policy and Legal

–Abigail Westbrook

It was great to see so many of you in person at the Law Conference! As we talked about at Law Conference, governing in times of conflict (including holding meetings and handling controversy) is tough. Your Policy & Legal team continues to monitor for new or revised proclamations that would impact your school district or your board meetings. Please note that as I write this in December, the requirement to offer a virtual option for your board meetings remains in effect. We've had a great deal of legislation, rule changes, and other developments that impact school board policy. Be on the lookout for the December edition of *Policy & Legal News* for the latest information.





Welcome to board service

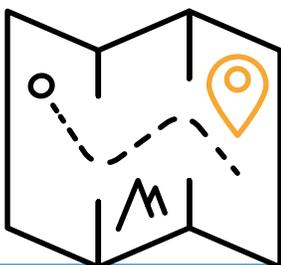
We're here to help navigate!



To get started, here are some ways to get started on your journey as a new board member:

1. Meet with your board chair or president
2. Connect with your superintendent
3. Review your district's strategic plan
4. Ask about the board's annual calendar of topics
5. Get a better understanding of the district financial reports
6. Bookmark wssda.org/training to keep an eye on current opportunities
7. Visit wssda.org/publications to read about subjects of interest
8. Stay in the know by joining one or more of WSSDA's email lists at wssda.org/lists

Finally, **reach out to us**. WSSDA staff are here to provide assistance, resources and support. You'll find our contact info at wssda.org/staff. We look forward to hearing from you!



Education in the 21st Century!

Spokane Virtual Learning (SVL) makes it easy for districts to provide their own K-12 online learning program with no upfront costs or loss of FTE.

Here's how SVL can help:

- Support for school districts to create their own virtual learning program.
- Personalized student interface is seamless and looks like you own it.
- There are no upfront fees! Cost is based on per student/per course.
- Curriculum is rigorous and aligned to state standards.
- SVL teachers are WEA members or use your own teachers.
- District-to-district partnership to create a strong student support structure and high outcomes.

Extensive list of courses offered to students in grades K-12, including:

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- Career & Technical Education (CTE)
- Spanish, Japanese, French, Latin
- Credit retrieval
- Asynchronous or K-8 synchronous classes



Spokane Virtual Learning

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Since 1991, our mission has been to ensure your search results in quality leadership for education excellence.



A hero in education

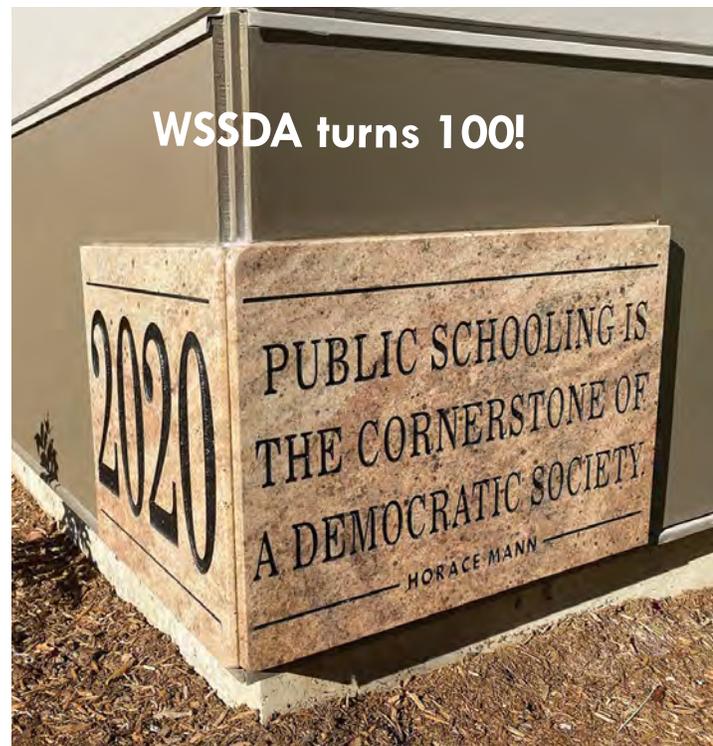
For only the fifth time in its 100-year history, WSSDA presented the Hero in Education Award at the 2021 Annual Conference. Leaving behind a towering legacy, WSSDA Strategic Advocacy Consultant **Brian Sims** received the honor about one month before passing away in December. Before the conference, WSSDA staff gathered Brian's colleagues on Zoom to pay tribute and give thanks for the example he set and his impact on Washington's 1.2 million public school students. Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt, chair of the WSSDA Trust Lands Advisory Committee, told Brian, "a quiet hero is seldom recognized, but their work is felt by thousands who never knew what you did for them. This is the legacy you've built."

The Hero in Education Award is the highest honor WSSDA can give to an individual. The award is for those who have made a significant statewide or national impact by advancing or leading an educational program or advocacy effort. For over five years, Brian served as WSSDA's strategic advocacy consultant. His efforts around capital facilities and school construction have been instrumental in securing financial and actual physical supports for school facilities. Brian's contributions helped raise roofs and shelter Washington's children in the pursuit of learning. With all the savvy and insight afforded by his 25 years of working with the Legislature, Brian was a master of balancing the concerns of numerous stakeholders to craft testimony and suggest amendments to support WSSDA's platform. Though he worked out of the spotlight, Brian will never be out of the hearts of those he worked with.

"...a quiet hero is seldom recognized, but their work is felt by thousands who never knew what you did for them. This is the legacy you've built". –colleague Russ Pfeiffer-Hoyt speaking in tribute to Brian



The year is 1922. The Lincoln Memorial has just opened, the first issue of Reader's Digest was just published (exclusively on paper), construction on Yankee Stadium has just begun, and baby Betty White was just born. But among this sampling of national treasures, something else amazing was forming in Washington state: the Washington State School Directors' Association (WSSDA). WSSDA has now served the school board directors of Washington for 100 years. Over the century, WSSDA has grown to serve the needs of its members, who are one of the cornerstones of the K-12 education system. Today, the organization provides leadership development services, policy and legal services, and support for legislative advocacy to address the concerns and aspirations of school boards statewide. As we begin our 100th year, WSSDA is launching a centennial logo featuring our continued path forward in providing a bright future for Washington state's students. You may see other ways this milestone is marked, but for now, let's give thanks to all those who served before us. Without their dedication and hard work, WSSDA wouldn't be where it is today. Here's to another 100 years!





Rising stars at Annual Conference

Johan Novak from Odle Middle School, wowed the Annual Conference audience with an original song and the National Anthem. Johan plays piano, drums, guitar, violin, harmonica, and sings with the Northwest Boychoir. At age 10, Johan won the Washington State National Anthem singing contest “Oh Say Can You Sing.” He has opened for the National Rodeo Finals and various artists, including Chicago, Foreigner, Weezer, and Boyz II Men. He also won first place in the National PTA Reflection Contest’s music composition category and outstanding interpretation award for his song “Legacy,”

which he performed at the conference. Along with Johan, attendees were treated with amazing performances by Mackenzie Gillett and Guthrie Bettinger from Kentridge High School performing two songs from the musical “Beauty and the Beast;” Theo Chattra from Newport High School, who performed magic at the President’s Reception; the 2019-20 Robert Eagle Staff Middle School Marching Ravens, who appeared via a pre-recorded performance; and the Ballard, Franklin Pierce, Kamiak, and Steilacoom High Schools for appearing together in a pre-recorded video performing the song “Hope Lingers On.”

Above: Musician Johan Novak from Odle Middle School. Right: Mackenzie Gillett and Guthrie Bettinger from Kentridge, an ensemble performance of “Hope Lingers On”, and a collage by Tyler McKinley of Kelso High School titled “Change Sings”.



A changing of the guard for the WSSDA board

Thank you 2021 officers; welcome to the new!

With the end of the WSSDA Annual Conference came the beginning of terms for new officers on the WSSDA Board of Directors. Outgoing president, Rick Jansons of the Richland School District, shifted to the immediate past president’s seat. Succeeding him, Danny Edwards of the Riverview School District took up the role of WSSDA’s president. WSSDA members elected Edwards in the fall along with the board’s new vice president, Sandy Hayes of the Northshore School District, and the new president-elect, Ron Mabry of the Kennewick School District. Mabry will succeed Edwards as president at the conclusion of the 2022 WSSDA Annual Conference. The vice president’s position will be open for election again in the fall of 2022 for school directors east of the Cascades. The vice president’s seat alternates between east and west every year.



Above: Rick Jansons, next to now incoming president, Danny Edwards, during the conference’s opening session.



New responsibilities bring new opportunities

The amount of required training is limited, but the benefits could last a lifetime

Washington state's 1,477 school directors oversee the education of more than 1.2 million K-12 students. That is a tremendous responsibility that all of us want to fulfill as best we can. To that end, the Washington School Board Standards identify multiple areas of focus that can lead to equitable educational experiences and outcomes for each and every student.

The standards tell us to provide conditions conducive to student success, commit to high expectations for every student, and that boards need to believe that all students can learn and achieve.

Growing your skills & knowledge

As part of its commitment to helping school directors realize their full leadership potential, WSSDA is developing a training program titled Commitment to Educational Equity. These trainings will give school directors a deep understanding of what educational equity means. Directors will develop their own cultural proficiency as education leaders and consider how to lead their school districts in a way that supports and expects equitable experiences and outcomes for every student in their community.

The Commitment to Educational Equity program represents just one of many programs under development within WSSDA's professional learning system, called **OnBoard**. Through OnBoard, school directors can access the training needed

to expand their skills and understanding while also meeting the new state requirements in Senate Bill 5044. The relevant curriculum is composed of an introductory course plus courses in:

- A. Cultivating Diversity and Inclusion**
- B. Developing Cultural Proficiency**
- C. Addressing Opportunity and Outcome Disparities**
- D. Eliminating Identity Discrimination**
- E. Dismantling Institutional Racism**

Multiple training options within each of those topics will be available over time.



Initial Professional Development

Beginning in 2022, school directors need to complete the introductory course plus one course in each of the first three topic areas above (A-C). New board members need to do so within their first two years. All other directors must do so within their current term. In total, the required initial training comes to 9 hours.

Continuing Professional Development

In subsequent terms, after completing the initial training requirement, directors will need to complete three additional courses from any of the topic areas above (A-E). Each training is 2.25 hours, so the total would be a total of 6.75 hours over the subsequent four-year term.

Outgoing WSSDA President Rick Jansons has served on the Richland School Board for nearly 20 years. He said,

“The longer I’ve served, the more I realized that there’s more I need to learn. The Commitment to Educational Equity training will take a few hours to complete, but what you take away may benefit you, and by extension your students, for the rest of their lives.”





Clara Jimenez
TOPPENISH SCHOOL DISTRICT

SPOTLIGHT

What do you do when you're not being a school director?

When I am not conducting school director business, I am a full-time K-5 English Language Development teacher at Hoover Elementary School in Yakima. I am also a council member for the city of Toppenish. If that isn't enough, I am also a mother to two grown sons who have blessed me with four grandchildren and three four-legged granddogs. Oh, and did I mention that I'm also the oldest of nine children with seven brothers and one red-headed sister?

What are one or two issues/topics/challenges that are especially important to you and why?

One of the biggest challenges that is especially important to me is how we get our students caught up during these challenging times due to COVID-19. I know that our students are resilient and will overcome these obstacles that have been placed before them. The question that I ask myself on a regular basis is, "How can I help our students become kind, caring, and successful members of our society?"

What is the most important thing you've learned through your board service that you'd like to share with others?

I have learned through my board service is that we do not have all the answers and we cannot be successful without the help of others. I have learned that we simply need to ask others for their ideas and assistance to help meet the needs of our students. I've learned that working together, we can better deal with the demands that are placed on us as board members and that we are all in this together because we want to do what is best for our students.

Where do you turn for new ideas about serving your district/community?

I try to keep up-to-date on current local, state, national, and global events by reading various newspapers, watching local and national news on television, and listening to NPR on my drive to and from work Monday through Friday. In regards to education, I attend various educational workshops and conferences throughout the year. My best ideas have come from conferences that I have attended, such as the Model Schools Conference, the WSSDA Annual Conference, and the Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents Conference.

2021 WSSDA Committee ELECTION RESULTS

WSSDA Board of Directors

- DA 3 Rick Maloney, University Place
- DA 7 Aurora Flores, Manson
- DA 10 Greta White, Endicott

Resolutions Committee

- DA 1 Ken Christoferson, Stanwood Camano
- DA 2 Arlista Holman, Auburn
- DA 3 David Olson, Peninsula
- DA 5 Melissa Beard, Tumwater
- DA 7 Trey Ising, Cascade
- DA 9 Keith Clark, Central Valley
- DA 11 Jenn Stevenson, Othello

Legislative Committee

- DA 1 Carin Chase, Edmonds
- DA 2 Dave Larson, Tukwila
- DA 2 Sara Betnel, Shoreline
- DA 3 Marisa Peloquin, University Place
- DA 4 James Stoffer, Sequim
- DA 5 Rebecca Stillings, Rainier
- DA 6 Crystal Moldenhauer, Longview
- DA 8 Maria Erickson, Wapato
- DA 9 Kyle Yancey, Nine Mile Falls
- DA 11 Jill Oldson, Richland
- DA 11 Steve Christensen, Pasco

Nominating Committee

- DA 1 Charlotte Murry, Stanwood Camano
- DA 2 Jan Bolerjack, Tukwila
- DA 3 Kimberly Palmer Yee, Fife

Nominating Committee continued..

- DA 4 Rick Eckert, North Kitsap
- DA 5 Soosi Day, Pioneer
- DA 6 Tracey Malone, Camas
- DA 8 Clara Jimenez, Toppenish
- DA 9 Dan Krouse, Chewelah
- DA 10 Allison Munch-Rotolo, Pullman

Interscholastic Activities Committee

- DA 2 Chandra Hampson, Seattle
- DA 4 Katie Marks, Port Angeles
- DA 6 Cory Chase, Washougal
- DA 8 Chad Christopherson, Naches Valley
- DA 10 Ron Cooper, Medical Lake



OnCall

**Goal for 2022:
Be happier and healthier!**

It turned out that 2021 was not the year we reclaimed normalcy from the pandemic disruptions. While we may not be able to change circumstances, we have control over our attitudes about the circumstances – and our actions based on those attitudes.

In studying the connection between happiness and good health, researchers identified factors that promoted happiness. Here are their top tips for being your most happy self:

SMILE: Facial expressions affect our moods.

CONNECT with family and friends.

VOLUNTEER, especially if you are over 70.

BE KIND. Pick a day and plan ahead to treat others with kindness.

PICK UP old hobbies and pastimes from youth.

SPEND money on time-saving services, such as housecleaning.

BUY experiences rather than things.

BUILD a network of other happy people.

SPEND MORE time in green spaces.

VARY your routines. Small changes to daily habits, such as new workouts, a new route to the store or a new podcast, can be stimulating.

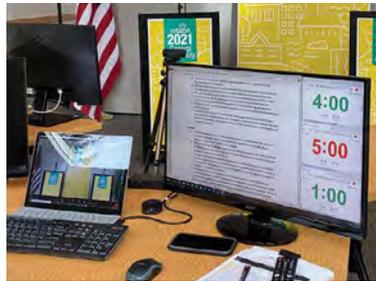
PRACTICE GRATITUDE. Reflect on and write down things you are grateful for.

REDUCE YOUR OPTIONS when making decisions. Fewer choices, or a limit on the amount of time for decision-making can reduce regret.



General Assembly

The annual updating of WSSDA positions and legislative priorities



The second-ever WSSDA General Assembly took place virtually on October 29-30, 2021. Board directors from across the state tuned in to discuss and vote on WSSDA's positions, the permanent positions that represent WSSDA's beliefs, and legislative positions that serve as a call to action directed at the state Legislature.

Voting happens at General Assembly, but post-assembly, all board directors (even those who did not attend the event) submit their recommendations for what should be WSSDA's top legislative priorities for the following year. This year, the results of that process indicated a consensus among school directors that emphasized the need for investments in special education and mental health supports, plus ad-

justments to funding allocations that better reflect actual district needs. You can find a one-pager of the legislative priorities and a complete list of WSSDA's 133 legislative positions at wssda.org/priorities.

The 2022 legislative session begins soon, and WSSDA encourages directors to engage in the legislative process even before then. While advocacy is a year-round effort, it is critical for school directors and students to be heard during the session. Getting involved is easier than you may think. For board members that live far from Olympia, sharing your thoughts on bills is just a computer screen away. Visit leg.wa.gov for more information on testifying and sign up for WSSDA's legislative updates at wssda.org/lists so we can alert you to those opportunities.



Recognizing School Boards of the Year

From the 34 Boards of Distinction, one board was selected for special recognition in each of the three size categories as a Board of the Year, and honored at November’s WSSDA Annual Conference. This honor recognizes boards that have demonstrated particularly strong leadership that clearly resulted in positive and measurable change in their districts. Given the pressures and uncertainty of the school year, all the Boards of the Year demonstrated creativity and resourcefulness while responding to the changes the pandemic brought to K-12 education.



Large School District Board of the Year - Auburn

Auburn’s board supported a creative approach during last year’s virtual learning by developing an Elementary PM program that provided virtual instruction in the evening to meet the needs of their families. They modified and adjusted instruction based on family and community input. Their data shows that large percentages of students of color, students living in poverty, and English learners benefitted from this program, indicating an impressive focus on equitable access for all students and families.



Small School District Board of the Year- Goldendale

The selection panel was impressed with the Goldendale board’s participation in the ‘Change Team’ process that allowed social-emotional support for students while focusing on redefining achievement and increasing safe and healthy learning environments and family connections. The data showed significant positive growth in these areas from the beginning of the year to the end.



Medium School District Board of the Year - Steilacoom Historical School District

The Steilacoom board’s use of disaggregated data identified that while the overall district graduation rate was increasing, the opportunity gaps in lower grades were not closing fast enough. This led to the board sponsoring a three-year district improvement plan aimed at unifying all initiatives related to social-emotional learning (SEL), universal design for learning (UDL), and equity under a single umbrella referred to as Enriched Core Instruction. The board provided clear guidance that this effort should ensure coherence between the district’s improvement plan and all the individual school improvement plans with measurable outcomes for students aligned with district goals.





Annual Conference's theme for 2021—Transform—was chosen to represent the changes in K-12 public education brought about by the pandemic and encourage us to build upon the learning and innovation that resulted. Over 800 participated in person; another 200 attended virtually.

Three pre-conference sessions were offered: Board Boot Camp, Law Conference and—new for this year—The Power of Student Voice, helping school directors learn to weave student perspectives into their work. Student board representatives participated as well.

Board Boot Camp, offered every year, gave new school board directors the chance to connect and get an accelerated introduction to the basics of board service. Law Conference, also held every year, addressed hot topics like holding meetings during times of conflict, major Supreme Court cases related to school law, next steps in the ongoing response to COVID-19, and more. >>

transform

2021 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

transform

CONFERENCE UPDATE



General session day, emceed by Erin Jones, kicked off with Washington Teacher of the Year Brooke Brown talking about intentionality in the classroom and the importance of everyone taking the responsibility to make positive change in the K-12 system. Author and speaker Houston Kraft spoke to the power of kindness and how the smallest of actions can significantly impact those around us. The WSSDA board, Boards of the Year, and WSSDA's 2021 Hero in Education award were all introduced via pre-recorded videos, now available at WSSDA's YouTube channel.

The last day of the conference was dedicated to over 40 breakout sessions attendees could choose from and/or watch later recordings of. The president's address to members closed out the day with WSSDA election results, and—for the first time—a student's address given by students.

Thank you to all the attendees, sponsors, exhibitors and event planning partner KF Events!



transform



from Vision

As elected leaders, school boards are responsible for working together to establish a vision and set priorities for their district. In the Wapato School District, one of the board's priorities was to work more closely with the Yakama Nation to better support Native students. "We're the ones that said we want to have more contact with them," said Wapato Board Chair Maria Erickson. And as simply as the board identifying it as a priority, the district began moving from a mere vision of providing more support to actually doing it.

Part of the beauty of Wapato's story, and one reason for their success in becoming a 2020 Board of the Year, is their consistency of focus, use of data, and engaging their community in the process of education.

One way the district engaged the native community was by holding small-group discussions with families. First, staff built a snapshot of native students through data that included academic achievement, participation in athletics, school leadership positions, extra-curricular activities, enrollment in special education, attendance, and more. Then, in conversation with the families, they collaboratively interpreted that information by exploring what it might mean, where the district and students were succeeding, and where they might be able to improve.

"I think what the district did was bold," said Elese Washines, Yakama Nation Tribal Liaison to the school board. "They didn't just reach out to tribal leadership for consultation. They also invited families to the table, which opened the district up to insights, and healthy criticism. That was a very powerful move in terms of how do we recognize and bring these voices to the table in a way that they feel like they're being heard. It was game changing, I feel."



to Reality

How the Wapato board set a course for Native student success



Located in central Washington, Wapato School District has the largest Native American student population in the state. Out of approximately 3400 students, about 680 are Native American. The Wapato School Board has demonstrated a tremendous focus on strengthening its relationships with the Yakama Indian Tribe and closing the achievement gaps of their Native American students.

With an intentional plan from the board, the district included the Yakama Nation Tribal Council Liaison, Elese Washines, on the decision-making team. Responding to requests from the Native community, they added courses teaching the local Native American language to their middle and high schools, and through a multi-year partnership, added mental health counselors from the Yakima Nation Behavioral Health Services at their schools.

Additionally, the Wapato board sponsored a new partnership with the University of Oregon Teacher Preparation Program with an emphasis on recruiting Native American teacher candidates.¹ The district's data backs up their efforts too, with the gap between Native, Hispanic and

“Part of the beauty of Wapato’s story, and one reason for their success in becoming a 2020 Board of the Year, is their consistency of focus, use of data, and engaging their community in the process of education.”



“I want my child to walk across the stage for graduation feeling like knowing their language is just as important as their high school diploma.”



white students narrowing or being eliminated in multiple categories, including graduation rates.

A central component of Wapato’s success is not only having a dedicated liaison between the district and the Yakama Nation, but also budgeting time to regularly connect with this person. Eliese Washines, a manager for the Yakama Nation Higher Education & Adult Vocational Training programs has served as liaison since 2017. She also fills that role for the tribe with an additional 90 colleges and universities for the benefit of post-secondary students. Washines acts as a bridge for ideas, aspirations, and updates to move between the tribe and the district.

“By making a place on their monthly school board agenda for me to give a report back to the school board from the Yakama Nation Education Committee, I feel that they really have met the call for meaningful, ongoing, and sustainable tribal consultation,” said Washines.

Washines explains that consistently being on the board’s monthly agenda is crucial. “With leaders on the school board and Tribal Council having so many responsibilities, having a consistent opportunity for me to report to the board helps to make sure that important things don’t fall by the wayside simply because people are extremely busy,” she said.

But just as families of any ethnicity can struggle with educational jargon, Washines found that she had her work cut out for her. Her ability to be fluent in both the tribal and public education worlds has made her well suited to act as a translator, but getting the consultation and relationship-building process underway required some linguistic legwork.

Washines explained the process and its intent to elders, who then helped her translate the ideas into their native language. The elders expressed to her that ‘if it’s important enough to do, then we should be able to describe it in our own words.’

And so, the elders helped Washines arrive at a name in their native language for establishing meaningful tribal consultation: Památamatukt tǵwa tananmí títkw’k. That name was assigned to a formal action of the Yakama Nation’s Education Committee. The committee acted to clarify that tribal consultation under ESSA Section 8538 and Impact Aid Law Section 7004 must occur between school district representatives and the Yakama Nation Tribal Council; that meaningful tribal consultation is not one-time, but it must be ongoing and sustainable; and to approve a protocol for meaningful tribal consultation with the Yakama nation Tribal Council through the Yakama Nation Education Committee.

“I think that having titles for these documents in our own language really provides a credible lens for looking at this new law as something that we can describe and talk about that our elders or ancestors would understand,” said Washines.

And the topic of language has been an ongoing focus for the district because parents asked the district to do more to teach their Native language. As a participant in the U.S. Department of Education’s Title VI Indian Education Formula Grants Program, the district is required to consult with parents and tribal leadership to shape grant-funded services that supplement and enrich regular school programs. So, when proposing how those funds would be spent, the district must get parental approval.

“Things were moving along quite well between us and the district, but about four years ago there was a moment when things got tense,” said Washines. At a meeting with a parents advisory committee, one person asked what would happen if the parents didn’t approve the budget as proposed. The district leaders responded by asking what they needed to do to secure the parents’ approval.

“One parent said something that has always stuck with me,” said Washines. “They said, ‘I want my child to walk across the stage

“ A central component of Wapato’s success is not only having a dedicated liaison between the district and the Yakama Nation, but also budgeting time to regularly connect with this person. ”

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for graduation feeling like knowing their language is just as important as their high school diploma.’ That stuck with me and became a pivotal point in my focus as an educator and also in the liaison relationship because hearing that parent speak so eloquently and seeing all the head nods around the table, I started to talk to leadership about how we were supporting language and culture inside our schools.”

In response to the parents’ request, the district added a third year of instruction in the native language and made sure teachers had enough release time to deliver it. Fast forward to today, and Wapato has seen four students go through the series of classes and become the first students in the state of Washington to graduate with the Seal of Bilingual for Native, Tribal or Indigenous language.

“There is much more to the story of how Wapato is supporting Native students. But among all of it, there is one universal conclusion districts can draw from Wapato’s example that will encourage the success of students in any community.”

Tavis Peterson, Wapato School District’s assistant superintendent may have said it best. “So much of it is just relationship-building,” said Peters. “Over time,

you build relationships and practice open communication. In the structure of it, it’s no different if I’m working with Native families or our Hispanic families. You’ve got to have open communication, and you really have to be an active listener just to kind of hear the story of the people that you’re working with so that you can respond in the most appropriate way.”

¹Learn more about the value of recruiting teachers that reflect the demographics of your students at <https://www.edutopia.org/video/why-teachers-color-matter-students-color-succeed>



“Wapato has seen four students go through the series of classes and become the first students in the state of Washington to graduate with the Seal of Bilingual for Native, Tribal or Indigenous language.”



A New Class is Minted at Maritime High School

Students, Staff and Community Celebrate the Opening of A New Maritime-focused School



The Northwest Maritime Center engages and educates people of all generations in traditional and contemporary maritime life, in a spirit of adventure and discovery.

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EQUITY IN ACTION

Where are we with special education?

by Luckisha Phillips

Being a parent of a special needs child has changed the “why” in my life. It has given me a deep-seated desire to see the K-12 special education system move in a way that lifts every student.

Every child deserves an educational environment with high expectations that provides the needed support to build a brighter future. Seeing the system up close has compelled me to add my voice to the millions of students, parents, educational leaders, and advocates asking for special education investments.

I was appointed to the Federal Way School Board in 2018, elected in 2019, and joined the WSSDA Legislative Committee that same year. And now, it is an honor and privilege to serve as the committee’s new vice-chair.

In 1988, the WSSDA Legislative Committee created a position highlighting a special education vision that we are still fighting for today. A system that will invest in every student’s individualized needs, fund every district by the children they have identified rather than a standard formula or artificial cap, and meet the growing demand for required, funded professional development.

School board directors across the state have looked at the data for special education outcomes. We have monitored the inequitable impacts on budgets, and in light of this pandemic, now is the time to invest in a change that we all know can be life-changing for the next generation. Will you join us?

WSSDA Position on Special Education Programs

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which requires full funding for special education programs and services. Such programs and services should maximize assistance to children rather than to their various categorizations and assessments. Any state funding formula shall:

- Recognize that costs will vary according to the needs of every child and, therefore, for every district, based upon the IEP of each student
- Provide adequate funding for all of the required services for eligible students without imposing an artificial cap.
- Recognize that any funding formula based upon the assumption that every district has the same budget percentage costs for special education is inherently flawed and will not work.
- Require and fund additional training in Special Education inclusionary practices into the General Education classroom.

Adopted 1988, Last Amended 2020

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Luckisha is a member of the Federal Way School Board and Vice Chair of WSSDA’s Legislative Committee



Students at the new Maritime High School (MHS) have quickly gotten to work on boats and the shores of the Puget Sound, learning about the local environment and the maritime industry. On Tuesday, November 9, Maritime staff, students, partners, supporters and families came together for a virtual grand opening celebration.

With more than 150 Zoom attendees tuned in, students Mara Mersai and Ryan Bonsack along with Founding Principal Tremain Holloway, shared with viewers some highlights of their inaugural year in the classroom, on boats and learning by doing, plus a powerful vision for the future growth of the school.

Congressman Adam Smith and Seattle Port Commissioner Ryan Calkins joined the Zoom celebration and spoke about the potential for maritime education and the opportunities it creates for students.

“I’m really excited about the Maritime High School. In our region there’s a tremendous opportunity to coordinate private sector industry and schools to help our young people to chart career paths and begin preparing for them,” Smith said.

At the celebration, Maritime High School coins were presented as gifts to the Class of 2025. The coins symbolize the voyage on which the students and the school are embarking. In the Maritime industry, coins are placed in the boat while it is being constructed. They are said to bring safe passage for the vessel and its crew.



“The coins were minted to encourage each student in the inaugural class to dream, to dare to go forth on this educational vision in this new educational vessel, Maritime High School,” Holloway said.

The school, currently located in Des Moines, is made possible by partnerships with the Northwest Maritime Center, Port of Seattle and Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition. It is a Highline Public Schools’ school of choice.

Maritime High School connects students with hands-on, project-based learning to create access to local maritime careers and open doors to college. Maritime High School is open to students across the region. Fifty-one percent of seats are reserved for students at Highline Public Schools. While the inaugural class is currently 37 students, the goal for the class of 2026 is to recruit 100 students. Interested students can apply for the 2022-23 school year in January.

Learn more about Maritime High School at: maritime.highline-schools.org/.



This story and many more can be found at ourkidswa.com. Let districts statewide see your good news by emailing it to ourkids@wssda.org.



Teaching In-Demand Skills and Launching Manufacturing Opportunities for Students

For David Cerio’s family, teaching and learning hands-on skills are a passion. Cerio teaches Core Plus Aerospace at Rogers High School (RHS) in the Puyallup School District (PSD), across the hall from his brother, a Core Plus Construction teacher. David’s son, currently a senior at RHS, is a Core Plus student with plans to study construction management at Washington State University next fall.

“Students are hungry for hands-on opportunities like Core Plus Aerospace,” said Cerio. “I have students who stay after school to learn manufacturing skills.” The Core Plus Aerospace curriculum has helped PSD students learn the hands-on skills that have been so important for Cerio’s family.

A strategic approach to building a CTE curriculum

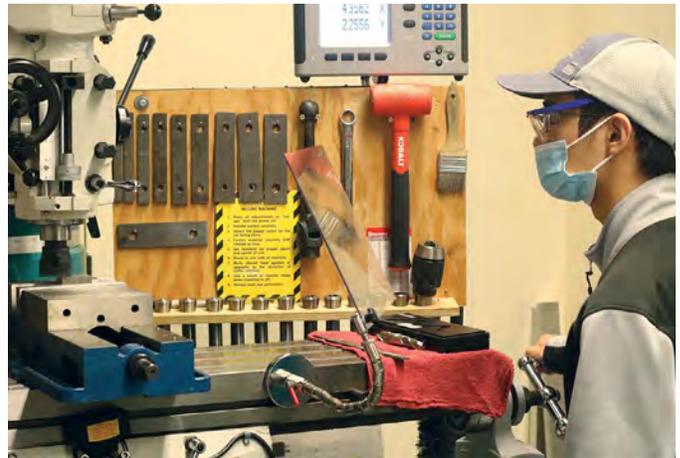
PSD serves more than 22,250 students and is growing. To best support its students with diverse post-secondary goals, PSD is intentional and strategic about efforts to continuously build and deliver a robust career and technical education curriculum that teaches hands-on skills and prepares students for opportunities after high school. That’s where Core Plus Aerospace demonstrates strength.

Core Plus Aerospace is a two-year high school advanced manufacturing curriculum, offered in more than 50 high schools and skill centers in Washington, that prepares students for high-demand jobs through hands-on learning. PSD offers the curriculum at its three comprehensive high schools and one alternative high school. PSD’s school board members are thrilled to offer it to students.

“Students are hungry for hands-on opportunities like Core Plus Aerospace,” said Cerio. “I have students who stay after school to learn manufacturing skills.”

“The curriculum prepares students with industry-recognized skills,” said Kathy Yang, past school board president at PSD. “Core Plus Aerospace is an incredible opportunity for our students to gain real-world knowledge and experience as they explore possibilities for their future.”

Core Plus Aerospace also appealed to the school district for many reasons. The curriculum enables students to explore manufacturing careers and get a jump on the future with the opportunity to earn multiple credits toward graduation. Also, the students can take advantage of dual-credit opportunities that are completed through Pierce County Careers Connection, a partnership of school districts and colleges in Pierce County that align the curricula of high school classes with college courses.



“The curriculum prepares students with industry-recognized skills,” –Kathy Yang, past school board president at PSD



“Exploring job opportunities is huge for our students,” said Dr. John Polm, superintendent at PSD. “Core Plus Aerospace is a curriculum that builds skills that are widely used and are transferable in a variety of industries.”

When PSD rolled out Core Plus Aerospace to the classroom, it prioritized supporting school leaders and teachers and partnering with them in the implementation process. Jason Smith, principal at RHS, said a phased approach that allowed for flexibility helped teachers meet students at different skill levels. PSD also used Core Plus Aerospace grants from OSPI to launch its program.

“Core Plus Aerospace students learn critical skills that manufacturing businesses in Pierce County and Washington are looking for,” Dan Parker, Workforce Development K-12

Partnerships provide students learning opportunities

Close industry partnerships, with companies like Boeing, also help ensure students’ learning experiences are relevant and aligned with workforce needs.

“Core Plus Aerospace students learn critical skills that manufacturing businesses in Pierce County and Washington are looking for,” said Dan Parker, Workforce Development K-12 Lead at Boeing. “The academic rigor gives students more options after graduation – whether starting a career, attending a community or technical college, or pursuing an apprenticeship.”

Core Plus Aerospace students can apply for paid internships at Boeing. Dr. Polm said students who participate in these internships can see themselves working in the manufacturing industry and it sparks their enthusiasm and commitment to doing well in school.

Industry professionals also visit classrooms to share their expertise.

“Industry professionals are educating students on what working in industry is like,” Smith said. “When students leave high school, they have a plan and the skills to be successful. That’s what we’re all about.”

Students earn industry-backed certificate

Core Plus Aerospace graduates earn a certificate of competency backed by industry leaders that shows the advanced manufacturing skills students know and can do.

“The certificate is a valuable tool for students,” said Cerio. “Students can walk into an interview and articulate what they know.”

The certificate is also a signal that graduates are ready to enter the manufacturing workforce, apprenticeships, and certificate and degree programs at two- and four-year colleges.

“We have a responsibility to provide our students with post-secondary options,” Yang said. “Core Plus Aerospace provides students a broader education that gives them valuable experiences they’ll use beyond high school.”



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Keynote speaker Shankar Vedantam, host of the Hidden Brain Podcast, will draw a connection between our legislative advocacy and scientific studies that examine how our unconscious biases—what he calls the "hidden brain"—affect the decisions we make as individuals, groups, and organizations. We'll also hear from **State Superintendent Chris Reykdal, legislators, and students**. The following week, join us for meetings with legislators.