



## School directors meet on Capitol Hill to push education issues

BY MARTHA RICE, WSSDA FRN CHAIR

**T**wenty-four WSSDA members joined more than 700 colleagues from across the country in late January at the 40th Annual NSBA Federal Relations Network (FRN) Conference in Washington, D.C.

During the January 27-29 conference, NSBA asked WSSDA to address the following topics with our senators and representatives.

### **Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)**

This is commonly referred to as “No Child Left Behind”. This legislation has not been reauthorized since 2002 and since 2008 has been extended through Congressional appropriations processes.

### **Sequestration and federal funding of education**

NSBA provided statistics on the impact that sequestration would have on already diminishing education budgets.

### **School safety**

Senators and representatives were urged to make sure any legislation affecting school safety is school-centered and community-based.

### **NSBA bill on restoring maximum flexibility to local school boards**

Senators and representatives were asked to co-sponsor this bill. It is titled the *Local Education Agency Governance, Flexibility and Efficiency Act of 2013*.

Attendees also attended workshops on these subjects. Copies of the PowerPoints and issue briefing papers are posted on the NSBA website. These cover a wide range of subjects, including:

- Privatization of schools, charter schools and parent triggers
- ESEA waivers
- The effect of the American Legislative Exchange Council and the Foundation for Excellence in Education on public education

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## High tech event set for Vancouver Public Schools

It will be a packed three days in early May when the National School Boards Association comes to town to feature technology-supported learning in Vancouver Public Schools.

NSBA chose the district last fall as one of four in the country to host what is called a “technology site visit.” Vancouver is the only district in the nation to receive that honor three times. The visits began in the early 1990s.

The events give education professionals a chance to

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## Innovation is on display for thirteen public schools

Thirteen designated innovative schools will exhibit their programs at the Legislative Conference's Innovative Schools Showcase on Monday, March 11.

The exhibition opens at 9:00 a.m. and closes at 2:00 p.m., on the third floor of the Legislative Building.

Since legislation was enacted in 2011 to identify schools that have implemented "bold, creative and innovative" ideas, OSPI has designated 33 Innovative Schools.

Tacoma Public Schools will be showcasing Washington state's first-ever, district-wide Innovation Zone, named by State Superintendent Randy Dorn in 2011. The zone includes 12 innovative schools.

Stop by to learn more about these exciting programs.

## NSBA: High tech event

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see firsthand the best ways to use technology in schools. Vancouver's event will be May 1-3. Attendees will visit K-12 classrooms and learn how technology is helping schools meet curriculum goals and spur learning. Stops will include Vancouver iTech Prep, a STEM magnet program, as well as other elementary, middle and high schools.

"Our vision for flexible learning environments is not about the devices," said Kathy Gillespie, board president. "We intend to equip all of our students with the adaptive skills they need to thrive in the 21st century global economy. This work is about ensuring that Vancouver graduates are ready for their future."

The featured technology ranges from tools designed to give voice to students with communication disorders to video and film development at the Vancouver School of Arts and Academics. The tour also highlights Bring Your Own Device programs, use of iPads in English, social studies and mathematics, a digital music program, interactive whiteboards and many other innovative efforts.

Transportation to the sites is included from the Heathman Lodge in Vancouver, where most out-of-town participants are expected to stay. Registration is simple at the NSBA website. The site also includes a detailed itinerary of the event.

"NSBA's Education Technology Site Visits showcase digital learning trends that have implications for district policies, funding, and questions of equity and access," said Ann Flynn, NSBA's director of educational technology. "These highly interactive visits help decision-makers consider those implications in light of real-world examples."

## LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE



## INNOVATIVE SCHOOLS SHOWCASE

**Monday, March 11**

9:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

### **iGrad**

*Kent School District*

A dropout reengagement program that is part high school, part community college. Due to its success, the district is looking at the possibility of expanding the program.

### **Kentlake High School**

*Kent School District*

The accelerated program at Kentlake High School introduces students to the rigors and expectations of university-level coursework and offers students the chance to gain college credits.

### **Kettle Falls Elementary School**

*Kettle Falls School District*

Teaches literacy through content rich explorations such as the study of the historical development of Kettle Falls and area exploration by French voyageurs and their interactions with the Native Americans.

### **River HomeLink**

*Battle Ground Public Schools*

The K-12, parent-partnered program offers professional development to all 450 families whose students are enrolled in the school.

### **Sky Valley Education Center**

*Monroe School District*

A public K-12 alternative school uses a variety of distinct, innovative programs designed to serve students and their families.

### **Tacoma Public Schools Innovation Zone**

*Tacoma Public Schools*

The only one of its kind in the state, there are 12 innovative-designated schools within the district. The schools within the Innovative Zone are structured around International Baccalaureate studies, Montessori, arts, science and math, and the 360 wrap-around approach.

### **Toppenish High School**

*Toppenish School District*

This STEM program encourages students to learn to analyze and investigate real-world situations and scenarios preparing them for college and careers of the future.

### **Washington State School for the Blind**

The school has developed a unique program based on Microsoft Lync that provides specialized mathematics instruction to their students and integrates with devices to display materials in Braille, large format and audio.

### **West Hills S.T.E.M. Academy**

*Bremerton School District*

A high-poverty school serving some of the neediest kids in Kitsap County, the school is in year two of transforming from a low-performing elementary school to a high performing PreK-8 STEM school now performing above the state average.

### **West Valley Junior High School**

*West Valley School District, Yakima*

A Lighthouse School for STEM Education, the school has a strong focus on STEM curriculum. Science scores have increased significantly over the past three years.

# Legislative proposals due May 24

Even though the gavel hasn't fallen on this year's legislative session, it's time to start thinking about legislative proposals for the 2014 WSSDA Legislative Platform.

WSSDA adopts an annual legislative agenda. Our platform includes positions which have been approved over the years at legislative assemblies and have been designated as "Standing Legislative Positions." Other positions come from the membership or are recommended by the WSSDA Legislative Committee.

Typically, each school district's legislative representative conducts a review of current positions and schedules time on one or two board meeting agendas to discuss existing positions and potential new positions. To submit a proposal, download the form from the WSSDA website or fill in the online form. Both can be found under the Legislative tab.

The deadline for submitting proposals is Friday, May 24. All proposals will be evaluated by the Legislative

Committee at its June 21-22 meeting. Districts will be notified whether the proposal was accepted, if the committee has made changes, or is recommending the proposal not be submitted to the Legislative Assembly.

School districts are encouraged to review the list of 2013 positions and to submit either an existing position or a new proposal. Current position statements are posted on our website, [www.wssda.org](http://www.wssda.org) in the legislative section under "2013 legislative positions." Districts should identify issues they want discussed at the September Legislative Assembly and added to next year's legislative agenda.

Last year only a few districts submitted proposals. The Legislative Committee wants to hear your ideas! If you have any questions about this process, current positions, or how to submit a proposal form, please contact Governmental Relations Director Marie Sullivan at [M.Sullivan@wssda.org](mailto:M.Sullivan@wssda.org) or 360.252.3010.



## Governor Inslee set to speak at Legislative Conference

Governor Jay Inslee is set to appear at the 2013 Legislative Conference on March 10. His speech will begin promptly at 1:05 p.m.

The conference agenda is packed with speakers addressing hot topics in education, as well as government relations representatives from WSSDA and WASA.

Register online now or onsite the day of event.



More than 400 attendees are expected at this year's event.

### LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE AGENDA

#### Sunday, March 10

- 1:00 p.m. Welcome
- 1:05 p.m. Governor Jay Inslee
- 1:35 p.m. Remarks from WSSDA/WASA/WASBO Executive Directors
- 1:45 p.m. Legislative Panel on education funding
- 2:45 p.m. Break
- 3:00 p.m. Superintendent of Public Instruction Randy Dorn
- 3:15 p.m. Legislative Panel on education policy
- 4:00 p.m. Thomas Ahearne, Attorney at Law  
*McCleary v. State of Washington* Update
- 4:30 p.m. Hot Topics  
Dan Steele, WASA and Marie Sullivan, WSSDA
- 5:00 p.m. Director Area caucuses
- 6:00 p.m. Legislative Reception
- 7:30 p.m. Dinner on your own

#### Monday, March 11

Day on the Hill (meetings with legislators scheduled throughout the day)

- 9:00 a.m.- Innovative Schools Showcase,  
2:00 p.m. 3rd Floor Legislative Building
- Noon Closing ceremony, State Reception Room



# School safety lessons learned

BY STEPHEN SROKA

*This is a condensed version of Stephen Sroka's article "School Safety Lessons Learned: From Cleveland to Newtown." To read the full article, visit [www.wholechildeducation.org](http://www.wholechildeducation.org).*

I dealt with school violence before it was fashionable and funded. To me, any child killed anywhere, anytime, is a huge tragedy. Working with school safety for more than 30 years, here are several lessons that I have learned.

**School violence can happen anywhere.** After school shootings, I often heard "I cannot believe that it can happen here." As we have learned, school violence can happen anywhere.

**Be prepared, not scared.** Schools are not powerless. Awareness, education, and advocacy can help break down the attitude that it can't happen here. Schools and districts need to have a school-community emergency plan of action in place for students, staff, and parents. It should be both practiced and proactive.

**Social media has changed how we communicate.** Texts, tweets, and Facebook posts, which were not around at the time of the Columbine shootings, now offer instant information—and misinformation. Before problems occur, students need to be part of a dialogue with parents and educators about how schools can responsibly use social media to make schools safer.

**Bullying is a symptom, and mental health is the issue.** Bullying is a hot topic and often is blamed for many of the heinous actions that result in deaths. Bullying is serious and needs to be addressed. Some experts today do not see bullying as a cause, but rather as a symptom of a mental health problem.

**Treat the illness, not the symptom.** Many professionals would like to provide a comprehensive mental health approach for the schools, families, and community. Perhaps depression screening for all students may prove to be more helpful in identifying those at risk of hurting themselves as well as others. The use of mental health professionals, such as school counselors, school social workers, school nurses, school psychologists, and school resource officers may enable us to help people help people.

**Building relationships is key.** We may need more metal detectors, but we must have more student detectors. The

Secret Service found that school shooters usually tell other kids, but not adults. Adults trusted by kids may be given life saving information. We need to put a human face on school safety. Students respond to people, not programs. You cannot mandate kindness, but you can nurture it by building relationships with communication, collaboration, cultural awareness, and caring. Words can kill, and words can give life. You choose.

**When kindness fails, you need to be aggressive, forceful, and effective.** An emergency plan of action needs to be in place, practiced and proactive. Teachers and students should be trained and allowed to practice lockdown drills. Parents need a low-tech and high-tech communication system for responding to school emergencies.

**Healing is personal.** Schools need to be prepared to deal with the consequences of violence immediately and long after the incident. Individuals react to grief in a wide range of ways, and there is no best way to grieve. Where some people need to process the grief immediately, others need to be left alone. Grief has no specific timeline for everyone.

**School safety has entered uncharted waters.** When I started working in school safety decades ago, the weapon of choice for school violence was a box cutter or knife, now it is automatic weapons. What will be next? Guns, metal detectors, mental health issues, zero tolerance, and other emotional issues make for complex and difficult decisions. A voice of reason is often lost in the heat of hysteria.

**There are no guarantees, only intelligent alternatives.** Today we are better prepared to deal with and prevent school violence than we were in the days of Columbine. There still is no 100-percent guarantee that our schools will be free from violence. There are no easy solutions, but there are intelligent alternatives to reduce the risks. It's time for all schools to explore these alternatives. For some, tomorrow may be too late.

Stephen Sroka, PhD, is an adjunct assistant professor at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland, Ohio, and president of Health Education Consultants. He has worked on school violence issues worldwide for more than 30 years. Connect with Sroka on his website or by e-mail at [drssroka@aol.com](mailto:drssroka@aol.com).

## Federal Relations Network

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

- Common Core Standards and Assessments
- Research-based parent engagement
- School emergency response
- School turnarounds
- Pre-Kindergarten

A small group of WSSDA members also met with staff from the Department of Education. The group discussed areas of interest to Washington's school directors.

Once armed with all this information, it was time to "hit the hill." Although our

representatives were back in their home districts, we had helpful conversations with their legislative aides. We met with Senator Cantwell and her staff. Senator Murray had to leave for a family emergency, but we shared our messages with her staff. They subsequently used that information in budget hearings held in February. Many of our FRN coordinating members have scheduled meetings with representatives back in their congressional districts.

We welcome any questions about the FRN work and encourage all school directors to become engaged in advocacy on behalf of education in their communities.



Twenty-four WSSDA members attended the FRN Conference.



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**WELCOME**

Congratulations to the following new school board members.

**November 2012**

- Dixie Budke  
*Lopez Island*
- Joe Dean  
*Trout Lake*
- Yvette Hill  
*Omak*
- Janet Leifer  
*St. John*
- April Messenger  
*McCleary*
- Larry Otos  
*Mount Vernon*
- Robert Rae  
*Columbia*
- Norma Smith  
*Selah*
- Charlene West  
*Curlew*

**December 2012**

- James Adams  
*Mabton*
- James Cutler  
*Tenino*
- Harlan Gallinger  
*Peninsula*
- Joseph Huttle  
*Selkirk*
- Andrew Seaman  
*South Bend*
- Charles Stroyk  
*South Bend*

**January 2013**

- Henry Browne  
*Cheney*
- Elizabeth Cerrillo  
*Mabton*
- Maria Erickson  
*Wapato*
- David Hughes  
*Lake Quinalt*
- Brian Johnson  
*Lynden*
- Christine Johnson  
*Sedro-Woolley*
- Dave Kiefer  
*Lakewood*
- Glenda Merwine  
*Coupeville*
- Scott Simmons  
*Liberty*
- Warren Smith  
*Bethel*



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[www.NSBA.org/conference](http://www.NSBA.org/conference)

# Department of Education says disabled students don't have equal access to sports

**T**he U.S. Department of Education said in January that students with disabilities are not getting an equal opportunity to participate in extracurricular athletics. The message came in a “dear colleague” letter from Seth M. Galanter, the Acting Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights.

Galanter based his finding on a Government Accountability Office (GAO) report issued in June 2010. He stated that the GAO asked the department to “clarify and communicate” schools’ responsibilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

The letter highlights warnings the section can be violated by school districts acting on generalizations and stereotypes about disabilities. It stresses that school districts must ensure equal opportunity for participation. But it is the following topic that is generating buzz in education circles.

Under the subheading: “Offering separate or different athletic opportunities,” Galanter said:

“Students with disabilities who cannot participate in the school district’s existing extracurricular athletics program – even with reasonable modifications or aids and services – should still have an equal opportunity to receive the benefits of extracurricular athletics. When the interests and abilities of some students with disabilities cannot be as fully and effectively met by the school district’s existing extracurricular athletic program, the school district should create additional opportunities for those students

## POLICY AND LEGAL



**Heidi  
Maynard**

with disabilities... In those circumstances, a school district should offer students with disabilities opportunities for athletic activities that are separate or different from those offered to students without disabilities.”

Galanter said an ever-increasing number of school districts across the country are creating disability-specific teams for wheelchair tennis or wheelchair basketball. He suggested that when there are not enough disabled students at a school to form a team, school districts can develop district-wide or regional teams, mix male and female disabled students on teams or offer “allied” or “unified” teams on which students with disabilities participate in team sports with students without disabilities.

For some school districts, such measures may seem daunting in cost, scope and liability. Others, like Minnesota school districts, take a different view.

On February 1, 2013, the Associated Press reported that Minnesota is viewed by that state’s Adapted Athletics Association as a model for including disabled students in school sports. Over the past two decades, Minnesota officials modified sports for disabled students to keep games fair yet competitive. They moved all games indoors, for example, so students in wheelchairs could participate. They also instituted a no-running rule. This minimizes the advantage of more mobile athletes. But the article also said that in St. Paul public schools, about three percent of students played an adapted sport last year. The adapted sports budget consumed more than 10 percent of the overall athletics budget.

When and how the OCR’s “Dear Colleague” letter will be implemented remains to be seen. WSSDA will continue to monitor the reaction by school districts nationwide.

*This column presents general information about the Revised Code of Washington and/or other legal authority which should not be construed as legal advice. You should seek professional counsel before acting upon any information or comments in this column. No information is to be considered to represent the position of WSSDA on any specific legal matter.*







## SPRING REGIONAL MEETINGS

# Taking TPEP to the next level

Dr. Jonelle Adams, WSSDA's Executive Director will lead Teacher/Principal Evaluation Project (TPEP) workshops prior to each regional meeting.

The TPEP workshops will cover the latest rules from OSPI and policy changes required for 2013–2014. School directors will learn about the impacts these new requirements will have on budget, staff development, data collection and contract negotiations.

Please register separately for the meeting and the TPEP workshop. Online registration is now open.

## FINANCIAL AFFAIRS REPORT

# Public Disclosure Commission report due in April

**\$** It's time to file the Personal Financial Affairs Statement to the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission (PDC Form F-1) for calendar year 2012.

The F-1 is due on or before April 15, 2013. School directors in office for all or part of 2012 in a school district with 1,000 or more registered voters must file. The F-1 can be filed electronically, by mail or in person.

For blank forms and instructions, visit [www.pdc.wa.gov/filers/appointed.aspx](http://www.pdc.wa.gov/filers/appointed.aspx). For more information, contact the Washington State Public Disclosure Commission at 360.753.1111 or (toll-free) 877.601.2828, or e-mail [pdc@pdc.wa.gov](mailto:pdc@pdc.wa.gov).

# SPRING REGIONAL MEETINGS

## March 4

### DIRECTOR AREA 3

Bethel  
Bethel Learning Center  
21818 38th Avenue East  
Spanaway, WA 98338  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. TPEP  
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Meeting

## March 7

### DIRECTOR AREA 1

Marysville  
Marysville School District  
Service Center  
4220 80th St. NE  
Marysville, WA 98270  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. TPEP  
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Meeting

## March 13

### DIRECTOR AREA 5

North Thurston  
MEETING  
Chinook Middle School  
Cafeteria  
4301 6th Ave. NE  
Lacey, WA 98516  
WORKSHOP  
WSSDA Conference Center  
221 College St. NE  
Olympia, WA 98516  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. TPEP  
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Meeting

## March 16

### DIRECTOR AREA 4

Sequim  
Sequim Middle School  
301 West Hendrickson Road  
Sequim, WA 98392  
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. TPEP  
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Meeting

## March 27

### DIRECTOR AREA 6

Kelso  
Kelso High School  
1904 Allen St.  
Kelso, WA 98626  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. TPEP  
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Meeting

## April 29

### DIRECTOR AREA 2

Bellevue  
Wilburton Instructional  
Service Center (WISC)  
Building 1  
12241 Main Street  
Bellevue, WA 98005  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. TPEP  
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Meeting

## April 29

### DIRECTOR AREA 8

Toppenish  
Toppenish High School  
141 Ward Road  
Toppenish, WA 98948  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. TPEP  
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Meeting

## April 30

### DIRECTOR AREA 7

Soap Lake  
Soap Lake High School Library  
527 2nd Avenue SW  
Soap Lake, WA 98851  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. TPEP  
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Meeting

## May 1

### DIRECTOR AREA 10

Colfax  
Colfax School District  
1110 N. Morton Street  
Colfax, WA 99111  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. TPEP  
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Meeting

## May 2

### DIRECTOR AREA 11

Walla Walla  
Walla Walla Public Schools  
364 South Park Street  
Walla Walla, WA 99362  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. TPEP  
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Meeting

## May 9

### DIRECTOR AREA 9

Spokane  
Shadle Park High School  
4327 No. Ash St.  
Spokane, WA 99205  
4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. TPEP  
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. Meeting



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March

- 4 Regional Meeting and TPEP Workshop, Bethel
7 Regional Meeting and TPEP Workshop, Marysville
9-10 Board of Directors' Meeting
10 Legislative Committee Meeting
10 Resolutions Committee
10-11 WSSDA/WASA/WASBO Legislative Conference
13 Regional Meeting and TPEP Workshop, North Thurston
16 Regional Meeting and TPEP Workshop, Sequim
25 TPEP Webinar: Take it to the next level
27 Regional Meeting and TPEP Workshop, Kelso

April

- 13-15 NSBA Annual Conference
26-27 Board of Directors' Meeting
29 Regional Meeting and TPEP Workshop, Bellevue
29 Regional Meeting and TPEP Workshop, Toppenish
30 Regional Meeting and TPEP Workshop, Soap Lake

May

- 1 Regional Meeting and TPEP Workshop, Colfax
2 Regional Meeting and TPEP Workshop, Walla Walla
3 Regional Meeting and TPEP Workshop, Spokane
1-3 NSBA Education Technology Site Visit: Vancouver Public Schools

June

- 21-22 Legislative Committee Meeting
21-22 Board of Directors' Meeting

July

- 19-20 Legislative Committee Meeting