



South Whidbey High School students in Chad Felgar's metals class weld the round base.

Schools shine in lighthouse project

Three school districts on Whidbey Island stepped out in the community in 2010 to help rebuild the island's Admiralty Head lighthouse. This fall, they plan to celebrate when a crane lifts the lantern house their students built onto a 100-year-old stucco-covered brick tower.

The effort has been marked by the tenacity of youth, a local business champion, inter-school cooperation, historic restoration and a lot of old fashioned hard work.

"I'm just blown away," said Chad Felgar, who teaches metal and wood working classes at South Whidbey High

School. "I had no idea that kids could pull off something like this."

Felgar and others saw the proof in late June when three separate sections of the lantern house came together. Each section had been fabricated at a separate high school before being joined at South Whidbey. The bottom tub was built at South Whidbey, the middle, curved window frame came from Coupeville's welding class and teacher Tom Eller, and the spire-pointed top at Oak Harbor,

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Don't miss the 2012 Legislative Assembly

All school directors are encouraged to attend the **2012 Legislative Assembly** and help set WSSDA's priorities for the 2013 legislative session.

The event is scheduled September 21 and 22 at the Seattle Airport Marriott (near SeaTac). To take advantage of lower conference and hotel room rates, attendees should register no later than September 4.

The Legislative Assembly includes presentations on hot topics, a networking reception, and the main event — voting on more than 75 proposals that will guide WSSDA staff on legislative issues for the upcoming year.

This year's event also includes an Innovative Schools tour on Friday morning, with the Highline School District serving as our featured district. The tour includes Big Picture High School and Aviation High School. Space is limited to 40 and there is no cost to attend.

For those seeking to boost their advocacy IQ, WSSDA is offering a four-hour legislative training. The session will focus on the legislative process, how to read a bill, and talking with legislators. The cost for the training session is \$45 and takes place Thursday, September

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The new lantern house will be installed atop the Admiralty Head lighthouse with a mobile crane.

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was completed under the direction of Jerry Mumper.

“This project is a prime example of applied learning, the core of our Career and Technical Education program,” said Rick Schulte, superintendent of the Oak Harbor School District. “Students worked on a real world project which had to meet industry standards, making it much more rigorous than standardized assessments alone can ever do.”

This fall, the unit will be placed atop the lighthouse at Fort Casey. It will replicate a design and look the island community has not seen in more than 80 years.

About 85, or one in seven of South Whidbey’s 500 students, played some role in redoing the lighthouse. There was a broad mix of students, ranging from those heading towards engineering degrees in college to others who hope to quickly get jobs using the vocational skills they learned on the project. A smaller number of students were hard at work in the other two high schools.

“Some students struggle in other courses here at school, and excel in my particular area of classes,” said Felgar. “I have the advanced students teach the newer students, which gives them confidence.”

There was something to do for everyone in this project: design, math, engineering, welding, metallurgy and casting, public relations, machining, and even a bit of historical research.

And just like in the real world, they competed for the jobs.

On a given day, you might have seen a student preparing a PowerPoint for a community presentation, turning custom brass hinge pins on a lathe, or studying the plans for a design that was more than a hundred years old.

The interdisciplinary approach allowed the school to give credits in several subjects for the student work.

The lighthouse was built in 1903, but was decommissioned in 1922. By the 1950s the lantern house was vandalized, dilapidated and leaking. It was replaced by a thin metal structure with Plexiglas. It had no vents, making it insufferably hot in the summer and it was not built to last.

Several years ago, local volunteers met with Archie Nichols, a former co-owner of Nichols Brothers Boat Builders in Freeland. They wanted to know what it would cost to restore the lighthouse. Nichols took the ball and ran. He set in motion a plan to have the three schools do most of the work, with businesses contributing materials and some specialty tasks. The state and others also chipped in some money.

“Archie was really the driving force to make sure we could do this project,” said Eric Nerison, South Whidbey’s Director of Technology during the project. “It was his energy and commitment that made it happen.”

South Whidbey High School was one stop on this year’s small school’s tour. (See story on page 6)

Notable quotes

“This has been an amazing opportunity for our students to work together cooperatively to design a useful structure that is a benefit to the community for years to come. It has been a wonderful journey.”

Dr. Josephine (Jo) Moccia
Superintendent,
South Whidbey School District

“Three different high schools had to partner on the project and meet specifications so that each part would eventually work together. Community partners have been involved as well, supplying materials, professional expertise, and advice.”

Dr. Richard (Rick) Schulte
Superintendent,
Oak Harbor School District

“The frame built by Oak Harbor students not only required that the inch-thick steel be bent, but it also had to be twisted precisely to fit. They had to build the tool they used to do this, giving this project that extra depth showing that innovation is a big part of getting a job done.”

Joe Hunt
Communications Director,
Oak Harbor School District

“We’re working on something that’s going to last 100 years,” said Colton Justus, 18, one of the student leaders of the project at South Whidbey.”

Excerpt from the *Everett Herald*

“That’s not just a piece of steel. That’s a sculpture,” Archie Nichols of Nichols Brothers Boat Builders in Freeland told Oak Harbor High School students Thursday as he came to pick up the completed midsection of the Admiralty Head Lighthouse’s lantern house.

Excerpt from the *South Whidbey Record*

Start early to conquer the achievement gap



Ten years ago, WSSDA published a report entitled *Closing the Achievement Gap: A Policy Action Guide for Washington State's School Directors*.*

This report highlighted the readiness gap and early intervention. It discussed questions that school directors should be asking and six policy recommendations to consider. (See pages 36–37 of *Closing the Achievement Gap*.)

The questions and recommendations are just as important and relevant today as they were in 2002.

What happens in the 0–5 year time frame has a tremendous impact on student achievement in the K–12 system, as well as how much districts need to spend on remediation. Research continues to confirm that an emphasis on early childhood literacy and language skills, kindergarten readiness skills, and social/emotional skills set the stage for student success.

The investment in early childhood

learning has a direct impact on closing the achievement gap before a child walks through the door on the first day of kindergarten. It allows districts to use scarce resources for academic purposes beyond helping students get up to grade level.

We have many issues before us in our districts—why should this one be a priority?

Washington state received an early learning **Race to the Top grant** that provides \$60 million over a four-year period. The money will be used to enhance learning for our youngest children. It is important for directors to be aware of what is happening on this issue—which is now referred to as P–3, or pre-school to third grade. There are likely to be activities in your community with policy implications.

The WSSDA Board of Directors will learn more about P–3 at our August retreat by having a study session on this issue. Educating ourselves will help us serve as resources for our colleagues across the state. In addition, there will be several sessions at the WSSDA

Annual Conference, November 14–17 in Spokane, that will cover different aspects of P–3, so directors will have an opportunity to learn in-depth about this important topic.

I encourage you to attend at least one of these session offerings as a part of your professional development program during the conference. I also encourage you to take a look at the questions and policy recommendations in the report and find out what your current board and district policies say about P–3 and early learning. You may be surprised at what you find.

We have a chance to make a huge difference for our youngest students before they enter our doors. But to do so, we must be informed and engaged in P–3 conversations. Summer is a great time to learn something new—so take this opportunity to educate yourself about P–3. You will be better equipped to take on the hero work of conquering the achievement gap monster.

MARY FERTAKIS, WSSDA President

**This report is located on the WSSDA website under resources by topic.*

WSSDA seeks FRN members

WSSDA is seeking members for its Federal Relations Network (FRN), a component of a nationwide network of school directors under the National School Boards Association.

Washington's FRN members communicate with their members of Congress on education issues. Mailings from NSBA and WSSDA help FRN members stay current on federal education activities.

Many FRN members will travel to Washington, D.C. in February to hear from NSBA experts and meet with their congressional members on education issues. Each member's school district covers the costs of the trip.

Members are appointed by WSSDA's president-elect prior to the Annual Conference, November 14–17. If you are interested in joining FRN, an informational meeting will be held at 7:30 a.m. Saturday, September 22, prior to the Legislative Assembly at the Seattle Airport Marriott.

For more information, contact Marie Sullivan at m.sullivan@wssda.org.



WSSDA
Legislative Assembly

September 21–22
Seattle Airport Marriott

Help set WSSDA's priorities for the 2013 legislative session.

Visit www.wssda.org to register.

Three candidates vie for election as officers

For president-elect



Mari Taylor
Lake Stevens

For vice president

(Listed alphabetically)



Aurora Flores
Manson



Chris Nieuwenhuis
Riverside

The WSSDA Nominating Committee forwarded three candidates in July for election as officers in the coming year.

The slate includes Mari Taylor of Lake Stevens as a candidate for president-elect and Aurora Flores of Manson and Chris Nieuwenhuis of Riverside for vice president.

Electronic voting will open August 27 and continue through September 28.

Learn more about the candidates

Watch candidate speeches and read candidate bios and statements on our website at www.wssda.org. The nominating committee encourages you to take a few moments to learn more about our candidates and discover what these potential WSSDA leaders have in mind.

Nominations from the floor

In the past, nominations from the floor have been conducted during the WSSDA Annual Conference. This year, because of our new online voting system, we are able to add nominees to the slate through electronic nominations.

If you think there should be additional names on the slate, nominate alternative candidates online between August 1 and August 15 by midnight.

How to nominate alternative candidates

Alternative nominations must be sent to the Nominating Committee Chair, Deborah Heart at deborahheartwssda@gmail.com, and copied to Connie Lauderdale at C.Lauderdale@wssda.org.

To be accepted to the slate, alternative nominees must be nominated by at least one member from five separate school boards, including one member from the nominee's own board. Please include the nominee's name, district, and the officer candidate position for which they are being nominated. If these requirements are met, potential candidates will be notified by August 18.

Alternative nominees will be given the opportunity to videotape a speech and submit a candidate statement, bio and photo to be posted on our website no sooner than August 18.

Online voting

Voting will take place online for the first time this year, allowing every board member the opportunity to participate in this important process. Check your email on August 27 for instructions on how to access the electronic ballot.

Do we have your current email address?

Please contact us at mail@wssda.org or 800.562.8927 to make sure we have your current email address in our system. Be sure to include your name, district, email address and contact information. This is critical to timely voting.

WSSDA Board and Committee Member Elections

Nominations and voting for open board and committee member positions will occur during the director area caucus meetings at the WSSDA Annual Conference in November. We will publish the open positions in the September issue of WSSDA Direct and on the WSSDA elections webpages.

Timeline for candidate elections

- **August 1-15**
Two-week period for accepting alternative candidate nominations.
- **August 18**
Potential candidates will be notified.
- **August 1-September 28**
Campaign period. Candidate statements posted online.
- **August 27**
Balloting begins. Voting instructions will be emailed to all Washington board directors. Ballots will be mailed through the post office if no email address is available.
- **September 28**
Voting for WSSDA officers closes at midnight.
- **October 5-19**
Run-off elections, if needed (conducted via email with a link to an online ballot).
- **November 15**
New officers announced at the WSSDA Annual Conference.

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20th from 1:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m. Participation is limited to 40 members and district staff.

Many school directors think that only Legislative Representatives (LR) can attend or vote at the Legislative Assembly. While the LR usually serves as the voting delegate, voting credentials may be shared among attending directors at each board's discretion.

"We hope that every district sends at least one representative to the Assembly this year," said Rick Jansons, Legislative Committee Chair, Richland. "The legislative agenda is set by those who attend.

It's important to participate so your district's voice is heard and you have a say in our agenda."

Attendees have an opportunity to debate and amend the proposals. Each district receives one vote per proposal, although delegates may request a "weighted" vote which allocates a different number of votes per district based on student FTE.

Districts also prioritize their Top 10 proposals, which assist the Board in determining priorities for the 2013 session.

Visit our website to [register](#) for Legislative Assembly events.

WSSDA ANNUAL CONFERENCE

New early bird sessions for 2012

Attend one of our [early-bird workshops](#) for in-depth learning opportunities during our annual conference. The following early-bird workshops will take place November 14th:

Take it to the Next Level!

Are you a first or second year board member? You have acquired knowledge and skills during your first year and now you are ready to take your boardsmanship to the next level. Increase your effectiveness by deepening your understanding of collective bargaining, Open Public Meeting Act, Conflict of Interest, Public Records and how a school board monitors district improvement. The afternoon portion of the session is *The Basics of School Finance*.

The Basics of School Finance

During your first year or so, you have walked through the district budget process and it is time to understand the bigger picture of school finance. School district funding has changed since 2011, with greater flexibility and greater accountability at the local level. This interactive session gives you practical tools to create best practices regarding budget and avoid future non-sustainable costs.

Communication Strategies: Sessions 1 & 2

Community engagement is an essential responsibility for board members. Session 1 focuses on effective communications related to bonds and levies. Session 2 provides you with practical strategies to build positive relationships with community members, different stakeholder groups, staff and students. Set the stage for collaborative and supportive relationships focused on student achievement.

Favorite early-bird workshops return

- Legislative Boot Camp Sessions 1 and 2: Introduction to the Legislature and Putting Legislative Knowledge into Practice
- New Member Boot Camp: Learn from veteran school directors about the role and responsibilities of being a board director.

Legislative Assembly: Hot topics

While the agenda isn't finalized until the end of the month, here's a peek at the topics we have lined up for the 2012 Legislative Assembly:

- Governor candidates Jay Inslee (Democrat) and Rob McKenna (Republican) – invited
- Legislative panel on Funding Basic Education
- Implementing Common Core Standards
- The State Board of Education New Accountability Index
- Compensation Technical Work Group Recommendations
- State of Education Address by SPI Randy Dorn

FREE WSSDA WEBINAR

Preparing your board for TPEP

Excellent teaching and school leadership is vital for students to achieve their potential. The Teacher and Principal Evaluation Program will provide the opportunity to accomplish both.

Dr. Jonelle Adams, Executive Director of WSSDA, will share her expertise on the components and implementation of TPEP at an upcoming webinar and at several in-person sessions. Adams, a member of the state TPEP steering committee, has developed a solid understanding of the legislation, implementation process and implications for school boards.

On August 14, WSSDA will host a webinar training with Adams as the featured speaker. This is the first in a series of training webinars the

association plans to hold on various topics. It will prepare you and your board for TPEP implementation efforts.

Adams will also conduct TPEP workshops at selected locations prior to the regional meetings scheduled from September 25 through October 17. ([See schedule on page 7 for more details.](#))

Participants in the training sessions will understand the major components of TPEP, including legislation, recognize the roles and responsibilities of school boards within the legislation, and possess a clear understanding of the board's next steps during the 2012–2013 school year.

[Register online](#) to secure your spot.

School districts shock WSSDA success during annual tour

BY ELISSA DYSON

WSSDA representatives were impressed in late May when they visited with the eight small school districts as part of the association's annual small school tour.

The first day included visits to four non-high school districts—Southsound, Pioneer, Grapeview, and Hood Canal.

President Mary Fertakis, Executive Director Jonelle Adams, Training Specialist Colleen Miller, and Task

Force on Small Schools Chair Elissa Dyson, talked with administrators and board members. It was clear that each district is unique, but they are united in their desire to prepare their children for high school in Shelton, North Mason and the world beyond.

The second day, the group visited three K-12 districts—South Whidbey, Coupeville, and Mount Baker. They viewed exciting student projects and talked with board members about the challenges their districts face.

The high school metal shop at South Whidbey was a fascinating introduction to a cooperative project to rehabilitate the Admiralty Head Lighthouse. The project was undertaken jointly by the three Whidbey Island school districts (*See featured article, page 1*).

The last stop was at Conway, a small K-12 district just off of I-5. The visitors engaged in a lengthy discussion with the superintendent and board chair about the changing education landscape.

The team left with a renewed appreciation for the seriousness with which board members and district staff approach their responsibility to educate our children.

These visits were the latest in a total of 107 trips to districts with fewer than 2000 students over the past six years. The information has helped shape association programs to meet the needs of districts of all sizes. The visits have also helped small districts identify resources for board development and school improvement.



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Small school facts

295

Number of Washington school districts

182

Number of districts with fewer than 2000 students (2010)

910

Number of school directors serving small districts

WSSDA's Task Force on Small Schools Issues was first appointed in 2005. It has 10 directors representing eight Director Areas, plus six liaison representatives from WASA, OSPI, AESD, SBE, the Rural Education Center, and the WSSDA Board.

Fall regional meetings scheduled for 2012

WSSDA has scheduled twelve fall regional meetings for each Director Area across Washington. Our online [registration forms](#) for these events will be available soon.

The regional meetings are a great opportunity to network and share information with school directors from around your region and hear presentations on current issues from education leaders.

Meetings will cover a variety of topics, including legislative initiative updates and association updates from WSSDA officers and staff. Detailed agendas will be available online later this summer.

Two-hour TPEP workshops precede most of the regional meetings. Register separately online for the free training.

September 25 DIRECTOR AREA 9 **Riverside**

Riverside School
District Office
34515 N. Newport Hwy.
Chattaroy, WA 99003

TPEP Training
4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Meeting
6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

September 27 DIRECTOR AREA 5 **Centralia**

Centralia Middle School
901 Johnson Road
Centralia, WA 98531

TPEP Training
4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Meeting
6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

October 1 DIRECTOR AREA 7 **Brewster**

Brewster High School
502 South 7th Street
Brewster, WA 98812

TPEP Training
4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Meeting
6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

October 2 DIRECTOR AREA 7 **Quincy**

TPEP Training
4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Meeting
6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

October 3 DIRECTOR AREA 8 **Yakima**

Stanton Academy
802 River Road
Yakima, WA 98902

Meeting
6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

October 4 DIRECTOR AREA 11 **Kennewick**

Kennewick
School District
Administration Building
1000 W. 4th Avenue
Kennewick, WA 99336

TPEP Training
4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Meeting
6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

October 6 DIRECTOR AREA 4 **South Kitsap**

South Kitsap
High School
425 Mitchell Avenue
Port Orchard, WA 98366

TPEP Training
9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.

Meeting
11:00 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

October 8 DIRECTOR AREA 1 **Stanwood/Camano**

Administration and
Resource Center
26920 Pioneer Hwy.
Stanwood, WA 98292

TPEP Training
4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Meeting
6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

October 9 DIRECTOR AREA 10 **St. John/Endicott**

St. John School
301 W. Nob Hill Rd.
St. John, WA 99171

TPEP Training
4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Meeting
6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

October 16 DIRECTOR AREA 3 **Tacoma**

Central Administration
Building
Auditorium (fourth floor)
601 South 8th Street
Tacoma, WA 98405

Meeting
6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

October 17 DIRECTOR AREA 6 **Evergreen**

Clark County Skills
Center
Main Meeting Room
12200 NE 28th Street
Vancouver, WA 98682

TPEP Training
4:00 p.m.–6:00 p.m.

Meeting
6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.

October 29 DIRECTOR AREA 2 **Auburn**

Administration Building
Boardroom
915 4th Street NE
Auburn, WA 98002

Meeting
6:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.



WSSDA Direct is published monthly by the Washington State School Directors' Association to provide information of interest to school directors and the education community. The views expressed in opinion articles appearing in WSSDA Direct are those of the writers and do not necessarily represent WSSDA policies or positions. If you have a disability and need this publication in an alternate format, please contact the WSSDA Communications Department.

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- WSSDA Board of Directors Meeting
August 24–August 26
- WSSDA Board of Directors Meeting
September 20
- WSSDA Legislative Committee Meeting
September 20
- Legislative Assembly
September 21–22
- WSSDA Legislative Committee Meeting
October 27

WSSDA WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES

- WEBINAR: TPEP TRAINING
August 14
- FALL REGIONAL MEETINGS (*TPEP Workshops offered)
September 25: Director Area 9—Riverside*
September 27: Director Area 5—Centralia*
October 1: Director Area 7—Brewster*
October 2: Director Area 7—Quincy*
October 3: Director Area 8—Yakima
October 4: Director Area 11—Kennewick*
October 6: Director Area 4—South Kitsap*
October 8: Director Area 1—Stanwood/Camano*
October 9: Director Area 10—St. John/Endicott*
October 16: Director Area 3—Tacoma
October 17: Director Area 6—Evergreen*
October 29: Director Area 2—Auburn
- ENHANCING LEADERSHIP SERIES
September 15: Policy Governance
Olympia
- ANNUAL CONFERENCE
November 14–17: Spokane