



# Direct

Washington State School Directors' Association September 2011

## Legislative Assembly prepares to adopt positions

### Budget issues loom large as school directors meet this month to establish WSSDA's 2012 legislative agenda

Against the backdrop of a struggling state economy and ongoing challenges for K-12 funding, WSSDA's Legislative Assembly convenes this month to establish the association's legislative agenda for the coming year.

Delegates from school boards around the state will meet in Pasco Sept. 23-24 to discuss and act on more than 50 proposals addressing education-related legislative issues. Proposals adopted by the Assembly become positions that guide the association in advancing and responding to legislative issues that affect public schools.

A number of proposals relate to budget and finance, an especially timely topic as the state prepares to receive the latest economic and revenue forecast. Early signs point to a continuing slump in state revenues, which in turn means possible further reductions in K-12 funding. Concerns have already been raised about the possibility of a special legislative session this fall to reduce the state operating budget, which was adopted just four months ago.

Other topical areas on the agenda include delinking state assessments from graduation requirements, teacher seniority and RIFs, hiring principals with no classroom experience, speeding up the teacher appeals process, and much more.

The Assembly kicks off at 1 p.m. Friday, Sept. 23, with presentations that will serve as a foundation for the Assembly's deliberations on Saturday. The draft agenda for the Pre-Assembly includes an update related to setting

up a state-run health benefits plan for K-12 staff and a presentation on many changes to Alternative Learning Experience (ALE) programs. Legislators and state officials will also participate in an interactive budget discussion with



Delegates voting at the 2010 Legislative Assembly (WSSDA file photo).

participants to prepare for the 2012 session.

Director Area meetings to discuss the proposals and learn about Assembly protocols follow the presentations. The evening ends with a reception for networking among participants.

The Assembly's official actions begin at 9 a.m. Saturday (Sept. 24) with consideration of proposed actions on Standing Legislative Positions, followed by debate and action on new proposals for the 2012 session. At the conclusion of

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# Changing—for the better

Jonelle Adams, WSSDA Executive Director



Regular readers of WSSDA's daily E-Clippings service will have seen last month's inspiring articles about the Highline School District breaking ground on a permanent home for Aviation High School near Boeing Field in Seattle. What a delight to read how the district has forged public-private partnerships to grow an innovative program that attracts hundreds of students to aviation and the subjects of science, technology, engineering and math.

Aviation High is a great example of the kind of innovation that is taking place in many districts in Washington—innovation that belies the notion that public education is entrenched and resistant to change. Around our state, school districts are embracing new approaches to prepare students for success.

In the coming months, school districts have greater opportunities to innovate for student learning. New state laws encourage districts to partner with the community, business and higher education to create learning programs focused on the arts and STEM. The encouragement comes in the form of waivers from certain state rules and the designation as an Innovation School or Innovation Zone. You can learn more by attending a K-20 Videoconference on Sept. 27 and WSSDA's Fall Regional Meetings (see page 7). I strongly encourage districts to consider applying for this new program.

Meanwhile, WSSDA is also embracing change. With the support of our Board of Directors, we've been working hard during the past year to improve our programs and services, and to grow WSSDA's credibility as a "go-to" organization for expertise and advocacy on K-12 issues.

As I look back on my first year at WSSDA, I'm proud of the strides we've made. We have been an assertive voice on the Hill on issues such as education funding and local governance. We have made progress in ensuring that the school director voice is included as the Legislature creates advisory committees and study groups. And we have been actively engaged in representing the school board perspective to other education advocacy groups.

We have cut costs and aligned staff and resources with our strategic goals to ensure we provide value-added services to our members. Using the Washington School Board Standards, we are revamping our board development curricula and creating new tools such as online board self-assessment and Data First training to inform decision-making. We launched a new website this summer to provide networking and user-friendly navigation to the resources you need. And we continue to explore opportunities to generate non-dues revenue and expand our services to support you.

Thanks so much for a great first year. I look forward to seeing many of you at Legislative Assembly, our Regional Meetings and the Annual Conference in November. If you have questions, comments or concerns at any time, please be sure to give me a call or send me an email (360.252.3001 or J.Adams@wssda.org). I'm happy to hear from you!



## Assembly

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the Assembly, delegates will select and rank their districts' top 10 priorities from the full list of WSSDA's legislative positions. This ranking will assist the WSSDA Legislative Committee and Board of Directors in establishing the association's legislative priorities for 2012.

"The Legislative Assembly is your opportunity to shape WSSDA's legislative agenda for the coming year," said WSSDA Legislative Committee Chair Rick Jansons (Richland). "Please read the proposals, discuss them with fellow board members, and be sure your district is represented in this important process."

To register for the Assembly, visit [wssda.org](http://wssda.org) > **Events** > **Legislative Assembly**. The website also includes detailed information about the Assembly program, including the preliminary handbook containing draft agendas and a full list of proposals and positions.

### Interested in FRN?

WSSDA is seeking members for its Federal Relations Network. FRN is a nationwide network of school board members who advocate on education issues with members of Congress and federal policymakers. The network is a component of the National School Boards Association

If you are interested in being appointed to the WSSDA FRN—or just learning more—come to an informational breakfast at the WSSDA Legislative Assembly on Saturday, Sept. 24. Look for details on the meeting in the Assembly handbook.

# Hollar, Rossetti join WSSDA staff

WSSDA is pleased to welcome two new members to the association staff.

Stacia Hollar has been appointed to the position of Director of Policy and Legal Services. She succeeds Marilee Scarbrough, who recently joined the Vancouver School District as legal counsel.



Hollar



Rossetti

Hollar comes to WSSDA with more than 22 years of varied public sector legal and management experience. She has served in the Washington State

Auditor's office as Deputy for Legal Affairs and in the state Attorney General's Office as an Assistant Attorney General. In both positions she worked with school district attorneys and other officials on a variety of legal issues. She has also worked as a private attorney representing school districts and other local governments, and as a research analyst with the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee. Hollar received a B.A. in political science from Gonzaga University and her Juris Doctor from Willamette College of Law.

Also joining WSSDA is Justin Rossetti, who has been selected as Administrative Assistant and Federal Relations Network Coordinator in the association's Governmental Relations section. He succeeds Sheila Chard, who is taking a position with the Washington Association of School Administrators.

Rossetti most recently served as legislative intern to state Sen. Brian Hatfield (D-Raymond). He also worked as a Certified Instructor for the Southwest Washington American Red Cross, served as President of the Associated Students at Lower Columbia College, and has eight years of progressive management experience working with Starbucks Coffee Company.

Justin earned his B.A. in public affairs from Washington State University, specializing in public policy and politics. Justin also holds an associate degree from Lower Columbia College in communications.

"We are delighted to have Stacia and Justin join the WSSDA team," said WSSDA Executive Director Jonelle Adams. "They are two talented individuals who will help us continue to strengthen our services and advocacy on behalf of school boards and districts around the state."

## WSSDA co-sponsors workshops on open public meetings, public records

WSSDA is partnering with ten local government associations in Washington to co-sponsor a workshop on the state's laws governing open public meetings and public records. The workshop, which will be offered in Kennewick and Tacoma, is focused on helping local officials comply with the law and avoid missteps that can erode public trust, cost money and distract from the organization's overall mission.

The one-day workshops will include presentations from experts about the statutory requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act and the Public Records Act as well as practical "how-to" advice on conducting meetings and

responding to public record requests. Program highlights include:

- Essential features of an effective public records program
- Open public meeting pitfalls
- Insights and tips on how to make and adhere to successful open government policies
- Opportunities to ask legal experts about open government requirements

The workshop is designed for local elected and appointed officials and their executive management teams. Cost is \$125 per person for members of the sponsoring organizations; lunch is included in the workshop fee.

For the workshop agenda and online registration, visit [www.awcnet.org](http://www.awcnet.org) > **Training & Education**.

### Workshop Schedule

*Workshops begin at 9 am and conclude at 3:30 pm.*

**September 27 – Kennewick**  
Three Rivers Convention Center  
7016 Grandridge Blvd  
Kennewick, WA 99336

**October 12 – Tacoma**  
LaQuinta Inn  
1425 East 27th St  
Tacoma, WA 98421

# State Board of Education gets new member, new executive director

The State Board of Education has appointed Tré Maxie of Seattle to one of the WSSDA-elected positions on the board. In addition, the SBE has selected Ben Rarick of Olympia as the board's new executive director. The appointments were



**Maxie**

approved during the SBE's regular meeting July 12-14 in Marysville.

Maxie's appointment fills a vacancy created by the departure of Warren Smith of Spanaway. Smith, former Bethel School Director and past president of WSSDA, resigned in June. Smith held one of five positions on the 16-member board which are elected

by school directors (three from western Washington and two from the east side of the state).

Since 2008, Maxie has served as Executive Director of Powerful Schools, a nonprofit organization that works with schools in the Seattle area to reduce the achievement gap. He is former executive director of Atlanta-based Tupac Amaru Shakur Foundation and also served as a staff member for former Georgia Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney. In that position he focused primarily on increasing the graduation rates and college preparedness among underrepresented youth.

Maxie was recommended for appointment to the board by a group of the other WSSDA-elected SBE members following a series of interviews with applicants for the vacant position. Under recent rule changes, Maxie will serve the remainder of Smith's term on the State Board, which runs until January 2014.

Rarick's selection fills a vacancy left by five-year Executive Director Edie Harding, who recently took a position in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Prior to his appointment as executive director, Rarick worked for the Washington State House of Representatives as a senior budget analyst for the Education Appropriations and Ways and Means Committees. Rarick's experience also includes Project Coordinator in the Evans School of Public Affairs at the University of Washington, and Director and Policy Associate for the New Jersey Department of Education.

For more information about the State Board of Education, visit [www.sbe.wa.gov](http://www.sbe.wa.gov).

## SBE adopts 'cut scores' for math, science

Accepting the recommendations of advisory panels and Superintendent of Public Instruction Randy Dorn, the State Board of Education has adopted "cut scores" for state-required science assessments in grades 5 and 8 and for end-of-course mathematics exams.

Cut scores establish the dividing lines between four levels of student performance on state tests— advanced, proficient, basic and below basic. Students must score in the proficient or advanced levels to meet state academic performance standards.

Last month, the SBE approved cut scores for the Measurement of Student Progress in 5th- and 8th-grade science, and for end-of-course mathematics exams. Meeting performance standards on the end-of-course exams is one of the state's high school graduation requirements.

The SBE adopted the cut scores based on recommendations from Dorn and several study groups. The cut scores will be used to report the results of testing from earlier this year.

## WELCOME, NEW SCHOOL DIRECTORS!

### Congratulations and welcome to the following new school directors:

Amy Mason, *Central Valley*  
Neil Fusch, Jr., *Freeman*  
Mike Haas, *Kelso*  
Brian Brooks, *Kennewick*  
Lorri Edwards, *Kettle Falls*  
Duane Pegg, *Ocosta*

### Thanks and best wishes to those who recently left school board service:

Wendy London, *Kennewick*  
Erin Buckley-Noonan, *Kettle Falls*  
Douglas Quinby, *Ocosta*  
Connie Smejkal, *Rochester*

## IN MEMORIAM

Diane Woodman, a member of the Freeman School Board since 2005, passed away July 3 after a brief battle with cancer. WSSDA's officers, Board of Directors and staff wish to extend deep sympathies to Diane's family and friends, to her colleagues on the Freeman School Board, and to the staff and students of the Freeman School District.



# Are you registered for the WSSDA Annual Conference?

Sign-up discounts are available through Oct. 14!

November is just around the corner—now is the time to register for the 2011 WSSDA Annual Conference.

The Annual Conference is Washington's premier professional development and networking event for school directors. Join us Nov. 17-20 at the Bellevue Hyatt Regency for a comprehensive program of learning and inspiration.

- Keynote presentations by Diane Ravitch, Charlotte Danielson and Bill Daggett focus on taking charge in leadership, teacher quality and innovation.
- Approximately 70 breakout sessions support these concepts, offer strategies for implementing successful programs and practices in your district, and allow discussion to deepen understanding of emerging issues.
- Early-bird workshops on Thursday include an afternoon session on Ethical Leadership or your choice of

three full-day workshops: *New Board Boot Camp*, *Legislative Boot Camp* and *Pathways to Prosperity: Careers and Technical Partnerships with Industry*.

- Networking opportunities, such as the Exhibitor's Reception and President's Reception, provide valuable times for you to meet colleagues and exchange ideas.

Also, WSSDA's future is determined by school directors through elections for regional and statewide Association leadership that take place during Caucus meetings, and business decisions that are made during the Delegate Assembly.

Be sure to browse through the Annual Conference website ([wssda.org/conference](http://wssda.org/conference)) for more detail, review the full draft program or register now if you already plan to attend. The final day for discounts on registration and hotel rooms is Oct. 14.



The WSSDA Conference Registrar will be happy to assist you with your registration or housing questions. Contact them at [wssda@kfevents.com](mailto:wssda@kfevents.com) or 206.349.5913.

## Customize your Conference with SCHED

WSSDA's online Conference planner—SCHED—is a fun and easy way to build your own customized schedule for this year's program. View session details, search for sessions by strand, create your personalized schedule, or network with others planning to attend the same sessions as you. SCHED is available on the Web and as a mobile app by visiting [schedule2011.schoolirectors.org](http://schedule2011.schoolirectors.org).

## Annual Conference features a powerful lineup of keynote speakers



Daggett

**Bill Daggett**, Ed.D., CEO of the International Center for Leadership in Education, is recognized worldwide for his proven ability

to move education systems toward more rigorous and relevant skills and knowledge for all students. He has assisted states and hundreds of school districts with school improvement initiatives.



Ravitch

**Diane Ravitch** is a historian of education who has advised state and national leaders about education policy and a vision for the future of

public education. She is recognized for her many articles and books, including *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education* (2010).



Danielson

**Charlotte Danielson** is an educational consultant based in Princeton, New Jersey. She has taught at all levels, and has worked as an

administrator, a curriculum director, and a staff developer. Danielson specializes in aspects of teacher quality and evaluation, curriculum planning, performance assessment, and professional development.





*Lead the way to learning* ★

The National School Boards Association's Annual Conference will help you become a better leader for your district. Get a national perspective on today's education issues in over 200 sessions:

- Hear updates on how the legislative agenda and federal court cases may impact your district
- Get best practices and new insights from your colleagues across the country
- ★ See how technology can transform the learning process in the expanded Technology Track

Bring your leadership team to share insights and make a greater impact on your district.

*a better tomorrow*  
**STARTS TODAY**  
 WWW.NSBA.ORG/CONFERENCE  
 REGISTRATION OPENS: SEPTEMBER 20, 2011

## Federal bills introduced to protect VEBA benefits

Bipartisan U.S. Senate and House bills were introduced in July to make a no-cost, technical correction to the laws governing health reimbursement arrangements (HRAs) utilized by Washington school districts.

Over 130 supporters in the Northwest have endorsed this legislative effort, including WSSDA. The bills (S. 1366 in the Senate and HR 2698 in the House) will provide employees more flexibility in designating beneficiaries for their VEBA plans.

Many political subdivisions, including 278 school districts in Washington, participate in the VEBA program. A 2006 IRS ruling imposes rules which cause participants in these plans to lose earned benefits if they die without a spouse or dependent. Under current law, for example, employees cannot name adult children as beneficiaries to their VEBA accounts.

## NEWS BRIEFS

**Pullman School District Superintendent Paul Sturm has been elected president-elect of the Washington Association of School Administrators for 2011-12.** Sturm will assume the WASA presidency in July 2012, following the term of the current president, Snoqualmie Valley Superintendent Joel Aune. Sturm joined the Pullman district in 2002 as an assistant superintendent. He became superintendent in 2006.

**The National School Boards Association recently unveiled a new resource aimed at encouraging school board members across the country to start talking with students about school climate.** *Students on Board: A Conversation Between School Board Members and Students* offers practical, straightforward guidance on how to truly gauge the school environment from one of the best sources available: the students. The conversations will be guided by questions from the research-based school climate surveys developed by NSBA's Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE) and by the Pearson Foundation's *The*

*Million Voices Project*. Visit [nsba.org/studentsonboard](http://nsba.org/studentsonboard) for more information.

**The annual Phi Delta Kappan/Gallup Poll on the Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools was released last month.** Among the many findings in the survey: Americans are supportive of teachers but have a less favorable opinion of others involved in education, especially governors and teacher unions. Respondents also favor multiple measures when it comes to deciding teacher salaries and layoffs, and feel that lack of funding is the biggest problem facing schools. View all the results at [pdkintl.org/poll](http://pdkintl.org/poll).

**The 'Fuel Up First With Breakfast Challenge' is underway with the aim of increasing participation in school breakfast programs by 50 percent over the next two years.** The challenge is a joint initiative of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Washington State Dairy Council, Share Our Strength and the Children's Alliance. Additional information is available at [fuelupfirstwithbreakfast.org](http://fuelupfirstwithbreakfast.org).

# Sign up now for Regional Meetings, Workshops



Regional Meetings are your close-to-home opportunities to learn about issues and concerns together with fellow school directors. WSSDA is presenting Regional Meetings in 12 locations around the state

this fall, PLUS—in four locations—a free workshop on Online Board Self-Assessment and Board Consultancy.

The upcoming round of Regional Meetings will include presentations on how districts can participate in a new state program designed to spur the creation of Innovation Schools and Innovation Zones. Other topics will include a recap of the Legislative Assembly and a preview of the 2012 legislative session.

The free workshop will precede the Regional Meetings in Cheney, Issaquah, Cle Elum and Vancouver. This 90-minute session will focus on using WSSDA's online board self-assessment tool to set goals and build an action plan.

Evening Regional Meetings are held from 6 to 8:30 p.m.; the Saturday meeting will be from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. The workshops will run from 4:30 to 6 p.m.

Visit [wssda.org/regionalmeetings](http://wssda.org/regionalmeetings) for registration, meeting locations, driving directions, and agendas. Workshop

information and registration is available at [wssda.org/workshops](http://wssda.org/workshops). If you or your district are interested in hosting a future WSSDA Regional Meeting, please contact your WSSDA Board of Directors Representative or Terri Eixenberger in the WSSDA office (360.252.3002).

## Fall Regional Meetings

*\* Indicates the meeting is preceded by the Online Board Self-Assessment and Board Consultancy Workshop*

Thursday, September 29 .....	McCleary (DA 5)
Thursday, September 29 .....	DuPont (DA 3)
Saturday, October 1 .....	Port Townsend (DA 4)
Monday, October 3 .....	Napavine (DA 5)
Monday, October 3 .....	Prescott (DA 11)
Tuesday, October 4 .....	Wenatchee (DA 7)
Wednesday, October 5 .....	Cheney (DA 10)*
Thursday, October 6 .....	Everett (DA 1)
Thursday, October 6 .....	Cusick (DA 9)
Monday, October 10 .....	Issaquah (DA 2)*
Tuesday, October 11 .....	Cle Elum (DA 8)*
Monday, October 17 .....	Vancouver (DA 6)*

## WSSDA 'Power Up' theme receives national award

WSSDA was recently honored by the National School Public Relations Association for its work in encouraging school directors to attend the association's Annual Conference.

In July, WSSDA received an Award of Excellence from NSPRA's annual Publications and Electronic Media Awards program. The award was given for WSSDA's "Power Up" branding which served as the foundation for a package of printed materials and electronic communications promoting participation in the 2010 WSSDA Annual Conference.

## Innovations K-20 coming Sept. 27

Want to know more about the state's new program for innovation schools and innovation zones? Plan to take part in a statewide videoconference presentation Sept. 27.

Led by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, this 60-minute presentation will focus on two new state laws regarding innovation in Washington's schools.

One law creates a process for school districts to apply for to their Educational Service Districts for designation as an Innovation School or an Innovation Zone. Approved schools would be eligible for waivers from certain state rules. Priority is placed on schools focused on the arts, science, technology, engineering, and

mathematics (A-STEM) programs that actively partner with the community, business and higher education to implement project-based or hands-on learning. Applications are due to ESDs by Jan. 6.

The other law requires OSPI to develop criteria and a streamlined review process for identifying Washington Innovative schools, to include information about them on the OSPI website, and to develop recognition strategies for the designated schools.

The videoconference presentation will take place from 1:30 to 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 27, on the K-20 Network. Videoconference viewing is available at ESD locations around the state.



WSSDA Direct is published ten times a year 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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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

State Board of Education, Tacoma . . . . . Sept. 14-15  
WSSDA Executive Committee (conference call) . . . . . Sept. 15  
Leadership WSSDA, Olympia . . . . . Sept. 16-17  
WSSDA Board of Directors, Pasco . . . . . Sept. 22  
WSSDA Legislative Committee, Pasco . . . . . Sept. 22  
WSSDA Resolutions Committee, Pasco . . . . . Sept. 23  
WSSDA Legislative Assembly, Pasco . . . . . Sept. 23-24  
Innovations Presentation (K-20 Network) . . . . . Sept. 27  
Open Government Workshop, Kennewick . . . . . Sept. 27  
Learning First Alliance, Olympia . . . . . Sept. 28  
WSSDA Regional Meeting, McCleary (DA 5) . . . . . Sept. 29  
WSSDA Regional Meeting, Dupont (DA 3) . . . . . Sept. 29  
Rosh Hashana (begins at sundown 9/28) . . . . . Sept. 29  
WSSDA Regional Meeting, Port Townsend (DA 4) . . . . . Oct. 1  
WSSDA Regional Meeting, Napavine (DA 5) . . . . . Oct. 3  
WSSDA Regional Meeting, Prescott (DA 11) . . . . . Oct. 3

## WORKSHOPS & CONFERENCES

WSSDA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
Pasco: Sept. 23-24  
OPEN GOVERNMENT WORKSHOPS  
Kennewick: Sept. 27  
Tacoma: Oct. 12  
WSSDA FALL REGIONAL MEETINGS  
Twelve Locations: Sept. 29 – Oct. 17  
WSSDA ONLINE BOARD SELF-ASSESSMENT/  
NEW BOARD COACHING WORKSHOPS  
Cheney: Oct. 5  
Issaquah: Oct. 10  
Cle Elum: Oct 11  
Vancouver: Oct. 17  
WSSDA ANNUAL CONFERENCE  
Bellevue Hyatt Regency: Nov. 17-20  
WSSDA/WASA LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE  
Olympia: January 29 - 30, 2012  
NSBA FEDERAL RELATIONS NETWORK CONFERENCE  
Washington D.C: Feb. 5-7, 2012