

AESD Dispatch*



**Dispatch: "The sending of a message with promptness and efficiency."*

Winter 2005

A Message from our AESD President



President Gordon Griggs

It is January, and 2005 has finally arrived. After bringing us many months of military, social, and political conflict, 2004 topped itself off with a natural disaster of staggering proportions. Yet, the global response to the tsunami disaster has been inspiring, and we enter 2005 witnessing relief efforts and charitable donations on a scale previously unseen. It gives us hope.

For those of us who are committed to improving public education in Washington, it is good to have hope when confronting the challenges that 2005 will bring. We can hope, for example, that the legislators who formulate the next state budget will do so in accord with Article IX, Section 1, of our state Constitution, which provides: "It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders...." Given the competing demands for state services, and the limited state revenue, it is difficult to have faith that the constitutional duty will be met, but we can at least hope it will.

It is no secret that public school funding is in crisis. In September, eleven school districts filed suit against the state over inadequate funding of special education. In December, the WASA Ample School Funding Project released a study showing Washington ranked 34th in the nation for per pupil funding during the 2002-03 school year. It was also recently reported that we were 42nd in the nation during the 2001-02 school year. While it is a good sign that our per pupil ex-

penditures increased from \$6,779 in '01-'02 to \$7,579 in '02-'03, it is still unacceptable that the most recent data available puts us in the bottom third of all states, and substantially shy of the national average (\$8,428 per student).

The WASA/WSSDA Legislative Conference is scheduled in Olympia, February 27-28, 2005. I encourage ESD board members to join local district board colleagues at the conference. We can all help to remind our elected representatives of the constitutional imperative to make ample provision for the education of all children. It is also an opportunity to demonstrate that ESDs are a vital and contributing part of the state educational system. The superintendents have compiled excellent written material about ESDs that we can use to spread the positive news about our work. It is good to have hope, but even better when we support that hope with direct and effective action. Thank you for your contributions to our common goals. Have a Happy New Year!

Gordon Griggs, Administrative Law Judge, WA State Office of Administrative Hearings, for 19 years, is the Senior (managing) Administrative Law Judge for his agency's Everett field office.

Gordon's wife, Valerie Stevens, is Regional Manager at the Sno-Isle Public Library System. They like to travel, hike, bike, ski, and kayak. Their son Galen is attending the University of Puget Sound, majoring in Economics.

Gordon has been an ESD 189 Board member since 1994, providing an opportunity for him to show gratitude and give back to the educational community for the excellent public education he received from Seattle S.D. This volunteer work also brings needed balance and perspective to his life. He is proud of the contributions made by the ESDs in support of public education.

What's New With ESD Board Members



**New ESD 114 Board Member
Karen Sorger (story on page two).**



**ESD 112 Board Member
Don Donaldson Retires**

Longtime ESD 112 Board member Don Donaldson will retire this month after serving 12 years.

Donaldson, who was appointed to the board in November of 1993 and elected by local boards in January of 1994, represents the Longview area.

During his tenure, Donaldson has been instrumental in major decisions affecting the ESD, including the development and authorization of the ESD 112 school construction management services; the acquisition of additional facilities to house the ESD youth school programs; and building a partnership between Washington State University, Hewlett-Packard and the ESD to form the nationally-recognized Science and Math Educational Resource Center. He has advocated at the national level for the ESD's Northwest Service Academy, which has grown to become the nation's second largest AmeriCorps program. Donaldson champions student programs and is an enthusiastic supporter of regional service agencies nationwide. He has represented ESD 112 in AESA, AESD, WASA, and NSBA and has maintained continuous involvement as a promoter of education at the state and federal levels.

"Don will be missed tremendously by the Board and the ESD," said Marilyn Koeningger, ESD 112 Board Chair. "We will be positively affected by his many contributions to ESD 112 and the students and staff we serve for many years to come," she added. The ESD board plans to honor Donaldson in February.

AESA Resolution #1 Update By Ken Seng

Last July, the Resolution subcommittee met with Brian Talbott and Ed Schmidt. Because of the complexities of the composition of AESA boards, it was decided to focus our efforts toward the Western Region. Brian supported the needs expressed in the Resolution. This resulted in an increased number of sessions designed for board member delegates at the AESA Phoenix Conference.

During the meeting of the Western Region at the Conference, we presented our Resolution. This generated considerable discussion and support for the Resolution. Brian agreed with the Regional approach and also suggested we work with the AESA Foundation. We will be exploring the potential of

involvement with the Foundation. Currently we are considering the feasibility of a limited regional gathering to focus on board development and education.

The Resolution will be an agenda item at the AESD February meeting.

ESD 101 is host for the 2005 AESD Annual Conference, April 21-23, at Red Lion Templin's in Post Falls, Idaho. *Conference highlights include keynotes by Mac Bledsoe, Dr. Michael Sedler, and Martin Flemming. Also speaking: Brian Talbott and Bruce Hunter. Mark your calendar now and plan to attend this exciting conference. Registration materials will be mailed in February.*

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News from Washington State ESDs

ESD 101: Spokane Public Schools and ESD 101 were recently named recipients of a three-year, \$8 million federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant. The award was one of 24 in the nation funded in 2004 through SS/HS program, a collaborative effort of the U.S. departments of Education, Justice, Health, and Human Services.

Goals of the grant are to promote a safe school environment, connect schools and communities, reduce substance abuse, improve school attendance, and increase mental health services to students and families. Specific services will include the development of after-school programs in the districts' middle schools, student assistance programs, crisis preparedness and early childhood coordination.

Spokane Public Schools will administer the grant on behalf of its own district schools, while ESD 101 will coordinate services in the Cheney, Deer Park, Medical Lake, Nine Mile Falls, and Riverside school districts.

The Spokane-ESD 101 grant was the fourth-largest in the nation and the only grant awarded in Washington and Oregon.

ESD 105 is proud to have Tamara Steen as the 2005 State Teacher of the Year.

Hosting "Coffee House" poetry readings, developing new programs to engage students in a higher level of learning, and connecting with students and families at school and with social activities are some ways Tamara has worked to know her students and encourage their success. These innovative approaches were some of the reasons she was selected for recognition as an example of teaching excellence.

Tamara has 22 years of teaching experience. She has taught all levels of students - from remedial reading to Advanced Placement English - a program she helped establish for Mabton School District.

"I am thrilled that Tamara has been chosen as the Washington State symbol of excellence in the teaching profession. There just aren't enough ways to publicly celebrate teachers, and the entire ESD 105 region is

proud to have Tamara represent this noble profession," shared ESD 105 Superintendent Jane Gutting.

Tamara is well aware of the challenges facing those in her school district and community. "Teaching children of poverty is my life's work - an avocation and not a vocation. A passion and not a job. I have made connecting with my students a primary focus at work. Until they (students) feel someone cares, it is hard for them to concentrate on academics - or even see the reason why they should. I try to get to know every student, letting each one know that he/she is valued," wrote Tamara in her application materials.

Congratulations to Tamara! ESD 105 wishes her success in the application for the 2005 National Teacher of the Year.

ESD 112: Six members of the Regional Committee on School District Organization were recognized during the ESD 112 Board of Directors meeting in December. Current Regional Committee Chair Bruce Hagensen provided an update to the board about the committee's work and described its purpose.

The Regional Committee is responsible for addressing petitions from citizens regarding the transfer of territory between districts in the event the issue cannot be resolved at the district level. Clark County has experienced a boom in requests from families to shift boundaries, mainly due to sprawling growth in the districts.

Committee members are elected by local school boards. The 112 committee was asked to rule on two transfers of property this year. One of those petitions is currently being appealed to the State Board of Education (see picture below)

ESD 113: ESD 113 and the Pacific Mountain Workforce Development Council are partners in the Youth Health Care Outreach Project funded by an \$87,400 grant from the Council. The Project brings together the ESD's 45 districts, New Market Vocational Skills Center, four community colleges, and eight hospitals serving five counties.

"We are attempting to increase middle and high school student awareness of the range of health care professions, increase student knowledge of the training required for health careers and the local resources available, increase awareness of the importance of math and science for health care careers, and increase students' opportunities to explore their aptitudes for work in the health fields," Kari Knutson-Bradac, project coordinator, said.

Groups in each county are organizing workshops and distributing the Health Care Resources "Crash Cart" (materials describing health care careers, financial aid and training programs, and providing promotional ideas) to all high schools. For information about the Project or the "Crash Cart," contact Knutson-Bradac at kknutson@esd113.k12.wa.us or (360) 586-1383.

OESD 114: ESD 114 welcomed the newest addition to its board in November. Karen Sorger looks forward to learning as much as she can about the ESD in order to work with her fellow Board members and staff to assist districts on the Kitsap and Olympic peninsulas.

No stranger to education, Karen served as a member of the North Mason School District Board for 17 years. She is employed as Director of Marketing for Claremont East, an assisted living, Alzheimer's, and dementia care community. She sees her board membership as an opportunity to continue her involvement in education and as a different way to give back to the community.

Karen went to Lincoln High School in Tacoma, Bellevue Community College, and Olympic College, and is a voracious reader. She and her husband, Fred, have two sons and three grandchildren.

ESD 123: Strategic Planning, while recognized as essential, hardly evokes a cry of joy when it is considered. ESD 123 is in the process of renewing a very successful planning cycle for submission to the Board of Directors in November of this year.

In the current plan, initiatives of importance include school improvement, data driven decision making, recruitment and retention of high quality staff for the ESD and for our districts, and improvement of services to our districts. We have enjoyed a high level of staff participation in these enterprises. As we look to the future we will develop a process that submits to our Board a clear set of pictures of our agency's preferred future and the major steps to achieve such a future. The clear challenge will be to gain authentic

involvement by our districts and our staff. We'll keep you posted.

NCESD 171 recently entered into a formal long-range planning effort with representatives from Upstream Northwest, to identify strategic initiatives for the next five years. Working with representatives of our 29 owner districts, we are identifying key issues and challenges facing both our large and small districts. Specific strategies will be identified to address these district challenges.

NCESD is entering the final stage of a multi-year grant in cooperation with our four public utility districts and the Department of Information Services to complete the testing and technical assistance of fiber optic and broadband capabilities in the school setting. The first two years of the grant dealt specifically with the challenges of bringing broadband capabilities into the actual school buildings, as well as assuring full K-20 and videoconferencing reliability. The third year dealt primarily with the implementation and testing of desktop videoconferencing capabilities at the building and classroom level, as well as the delivery of curriculum/content over a broadband system. The final two years of the grant will specifically test the abilities of the system to provide cost effective and reliable desktop to desktop videoconferencing, voice over IP telephonic services, as well as video-streaming of classroom media.

NWESD 189's Transportation Department and Prevention Center were recently awarded \$89,985 by the WA State Department of Transportation to provide transportation services to homeless children and youth. The grant reimburses school districts for overages as a result of transporting homeless children and youth to their school of origin, supports a small flexible fund available to local shelters to reimburse parents for similar costs, and provides technical assistance to help school districts develop and maintain transportation programs.

With the recent reauthorization of the McKinney-Vento legislation, school districts are required to provide or arrange transportation to and from school for students who are experiencing homelessness. While this provides stability for the students and their families in this time of crisis, it also represents multiple challenges to school districts as they coordinate transportation services.

This competitive grant was funded through a \$1,000,000 federal grant to the Washington State Department of Transportation in an effort to "create innovative approaches to transporting homeless students to and from school."

Marilee Scarborough of WSSDA will serve as acting AESD staff liaison until mid-February, due to the resignation of Ingrid Gourley, effective December 31.



Pictured from left to right: ESD 112 Board Chair Marilyn Koenninger, Regional Committee members James Tormanen, Jim Kolshinski, Christine Wamsley, Bruce Hagensen (Chair), Virgil Williams and Rob Rice.

Coming Events

February 28, 2005 AESD Executive Board Meeting, 12 noon, WSSDA Office
April 21-23, 2005 AESD Annual Conference/ Executive Board Meeting