

AESD Dispatch*



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

Fall 2005

www.aesd-wa.org

A Message from the President



President Maggie Perez

The AESD Executive Board met for a mini retreat in Ellensburg on September 19, 2005.

The purpose of our retreat was to identify AESD Goals and Strategies that would assist us in edifying a stronger collaboration with our school districts; build capacity to ensure student success; create partnerships with those involved in the welfare and services of students' pre-K-12; and to develop an AESD communication plan to be utilized by all members to advocate for AESD systems, goals and strategies.

Superintendent Rich McBride and Eldene Wall, North Central ESD 171, presented the board with their achievement and implementation of the AESD website, www.aesd-wa.org. We are tremendously appreciative of Rich and Eldene for this great accomplishment — our own AESD web site. Thanks again!

Our AESD retreat was a huge success. I am appreciative of being part of our Executive Board, and value the talent and passion all board members con-

vey. It is evident that our vision and commitment is to the education of all children to receive quality education in Washington State.

ESD 101 Superintendent Terry Munther represents ESDs on the Washington Learns K-12 Advisory Committee. After attending the first advisory committee meeting, Terry believes the Washington Learns Steering Committee will look to change ESDs and other parts of government to become much more effective parts of a statewide pre-K through higher education system. Terry suggests that ESDs should take the lead in this thinking and planning rather than merely reacting to any changes that the Washington Learns Steering Committee may propose. Terry suggests that AESD address the questions he's projected:

- How have we been able to demonstrate a statewide system success?
- What are we doing about standardization and capacity among ESDs?
- What are some examples of cost effectiveness we can demonstrate?

Discussion to address Terry's questions will take place at our Executive Board meeting in Seattle, Thursday, November 17, 2005.

Personally, the mini retreat was an exceptional learning experience. I'm happy to have a role in AESD advocating the importance of education in this educational system. I am learning daily and loving it.

2006 AESD Conference Preview



2006 AESD Conference keynote speaker Erin Gruwell

The 2006 AESD Conference, hosted by Olympic ESD 114, will feature keynote speaker Erin Gruwell.

As an idealistic twenty-three year old English teacher in Long Beach, California, Erin Gruwell confronted

a room of "unteachable, at-risk" students. One day she intercepted a note with an ugly racial caricature, and angrily declared that this was precisely the sort of thing that led to the Holocaust — only to be met by uncomprehending looks. So she and her students, using the treasured books *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* and *Zlata's Diary: A Child's Life in Sarajevo* as their guides, undertook a life-changing odyssey against intolerance and misunderstanding. They learned to see the parallels in these books to their own lives, recording their thoughts and feelings in diaries and dubbing themselves the "Freedom Writers," in homage to the civil rights activists "The Freedom Riders."

Erin Gruwell will inspire listeners with the story of how a teacher and 150 teens used writing to change themselves and the world around them.

News from Washington State ESDs

ESD 101: The Northeast Washington Education Council — the non-profit foundation affiliated with ESD 101 — has been awarded its first federal grant. NEWEC has been named the recipient of a \$50,000 award from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The grant was made through the Compassion Capital Fund (CCF) Targeted Capacity Building Program.

The federal program is designed to help promising community organizations bolster their infrastructure, sustainability and, ultimately, their ability to serve constituents. Organizations serving at-risk youth are a CCF priority.

NEWEC is a relatively new foundation whose goal is to advance the educational and public service mission of ESD 101. The Council exists to receive, manage and distribute income and gifts for the benefit of ESD 101 and the districts, schools and students it serves. The Council accepts gifts from individuals, foundations, corporations, associations and government sources. As a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization, gifts to NEWEC may be tax deductible.

NEWEC will use the grant for both infrastructure development — including specialized data base software — and an outreach campaign raising awareness of the foundation's mission. For more informa-

tion on NEWEC, please visit <http://www.newec.org>.

ESD 105 received a three-year grant of \$2,531,038 from the U.S. Dept. of Education called the *Diverse Partnerships for Early Literacy Project*. This innovative project will develop the cognitive, oral and printed language skills of Head Start and preschool children. It prepares them for kindergarten through a unique combination of family involvement, class activities, technology and partnerships with three local school districts.

The first year of the project will initiate this January. ESD 105 will partner in this work with Puget Sound ESD, which is in the third year of a similar grant and has established training modules that will be used in the local project.

This new partnership will serve the Wapato School District preschool as well as the three Yakama Nation Head Start sites whose children will attend kindergarten in the Toppenish, Wapato and Mt. Adams school districts. The project will involve approximately 220 children, their families, and 34 preschool staff members, and affect the approximately 750 kindergarten students in the three participating school districts. ESD 105 will be the fiscal agent for the project and provide training and tech-

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See the *AESD Website* for the calendar of events and other *AESD* information.

News from Washington State ESDs

nical assistance at all four sites.

The grant will provide funding for staffing a full-time literacy director and three literacy coaches who will help achieve and assess the children's growth, and who will provide early learning skills to the families of those enrolled. It will also provide literacy materials including streaming video professional development, books, and activity alphabets, as well as backpacks with tape-recorded learning programs to be loaned to parents.

"It's taking a good program and adding the rich literacy component that will make Head Start an even greater program," said Jane Gutting, ESD 105 Superintendent. "These new services will be vital to closing the achievement gap in this valley, and in bridging more involvement between the Yakama Nation and school systems. Our result will be quality preschools that provide far-reaching benefits for the children who attend them."

ESD 112 has been notified that it is the recipient of a national award presented by the National Rural Education Association (NREA). The award recognizes outstanding programs, service and leadership that promote equitable educational opportunities for rural school children and their communities. Nominated by the superintendents of the Columbia River school districts, ESD 112 will accept the Howard A. Dawson Award at the 97th Annual NREA Convention in Tucson, Arizona, in November. Stevenson-Carson Superintendent Jim Saltness praised the ESD in the nomination application. "Service is not only the organization's middle name, it is the way ESD 112 employees tackle every request - large or small - from member districts," he wrote.

"We are thrilled with this national recognition, but more importantly, we are honored that our local superintendents took the

time and effort to recognize the work that we do together," said ESD 112 Superintendent Twyla Barnes. "Service to rural schools is the backbone of our agency," she added.

White Salmon Valley School District Superintendent Dale Palmer said his 1,800-student school district doesn't have enough staff or resources to secure services that are needed at any given time, but he is assured that ESD experts are available whenever needed.

ESD 112 was recognized for building sustainable, cost-saving cooperatives including special education, transportation and health, risk and insurance. The nomination also included supportive material for ESD staff development and teacher training, school improvement assistance and innovative programs that benefit hundreds of students and teachers in rural school districts throughout southwest Washington.

ESD 113: Susan Barnard, a 10-year veteran teacher at Shelton's Choice High School in ESD 113, is the 2006 Washington State "Teacher of the Year." Terry Bergeson, state superintendent, said, "Barnard's effectiveness as an educator with heart and skill make her an outstanding example of the teaching profession."

Barnard cheerfully concedes that she goes above and beyond generally accepted teaching methods - sometimes to the point of using subterfuge - to motivate her students and convince them that getting an education is really worthwhile.

"I try to build a relationship with each student, sometimes almost tricking them into doing some work for me, and then we celebrate even the smallest successes. Seeing students build on those little, tiny successes is my biggest challenge, but also my greatest satisfaction," she said.

She said a key to her teaching success is "letting students know I think they can do it and holding them to a standard by being there to support them in their efforts to achieve that standard."

OESD 114: (See front page)

ESD 123: Teri Perez, Pasco High School, was selected as the 2006 Regional Teacher of the Year and represented Educational Service District 123 as the nominee for 2006 State Teacher of the Year.

Teri has been an ESL/Spanish Literacy teacher for Pasco High School for the past 15 years and has over 30 years of teaching experience. She was recognized for her willingness to go the extra mile and serve as an excellent role model. As English Language Development Department Chair, Teri has developed a program that is nationally recognized for its excellence and made Pasco High a school-wide service model of alternative assessment. She has implemented integration of curriculum for multi-age and multicultural classrooms. She is seen as a teacher who is uniquely capable of teaching in any area, but her dedication to students in ELD results in her students being academically successful and graduating from high school; often being the first in their families to do so.

As the 2006 ESD 123 Regional Teacher of the Year, she will receive the Thomas Handy Award of \$500, sponsored by PEMCO Insurance. She was a nominee to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction for the 2006 Washington State Teacher of the Year (pictured in back row, far right).

On October 27, administrators in 17 school districts in the **NCESD 171** region were once again offered a rare opportunity to engage in meaningful learning, dialogue and activities as they learned more about "Education in Motion: Leading in a Culture of Change." Their insight into, and understanding of, student achievement and the change process was deepened and they were encouraged to create new and more effective strategies to apply in their districts.

Presenting this meaningful information was Dr. Paul Shaw, colleague of Dr. Michael Fullan, who shared information on Professional Learning Communities as part of their year-long work project in our area. The focus was on improved teaching and learning, identifying cutting edge research, and collaborative practice involving education reform.

NWESD 189 has received a three-year \$7.9 million federal Department of Education grant to support a comprehensive approach to better ensure Skagit County children are safe and have access to community and school support systems dedicated to their health and safety.

This community partnership will support the following goals:

- Safe and drug-free school environments.
- Appropriate mental health treatment, case management and support services to school age children.
- Early childhood staff training and parent education, as well as family support services, to high-risk new mothers to improve the social/emotional development of children.
- Community-based organization and individual participation in school, community, and Consortium prevention activities. Goals will be accomplished by:
 - Ten additional Prevention/Intervention Specialists.
 - Providing and teaching Best Practices Prevention Curriculum and Programs.
 - Parent/guardian participation in drug, alcohol and violence prevention programs.
 - Community-based mental health prevention, screening and assessments; with early intervention and follow-up services to children and families from early childhood through grade twelve.
 - Three Early Learning Specialists.
 - A Welcome Baby Coordinator
 - The creation of a Nurse-Family Partnership Program.

Puget Sound ESD will be operating from their new Renton headquarters beginning November 7. They are very excited about their new facility and the opportunities it affords them to serve their region in new and improved ways. The new switchboard number is (425) 917-7600 and new address is 800 Oakesdale Ave. SW, Renton WA, 98055-1221

In other news, they conducted a regional customer perception survey last spring that was completed by 4,100 teachers, administrators, related services personnel, para-professionals, classified and early learning staff from 30 school districts. The survey gave them valuable information regarding services and delivery of them.

Participants rated the importance of their Board's Ends, and performance in achieving them. Of most importance to their constituents: Helping school districts to improve student learning; helping districts to improve safety, civility and support in learning environments; and facilitating districts' ability to increase economic efficiencies and resources.



2005 Regional Teachers of the Year shown with State Superintendent Terry Bergeson at the October 18 award program. Susan Barnard, from Shelton's CHOICE Alternative Schools, was selected as 2005 Washington State Teacher of the Year (second from left, front row).