



AESD EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING – Minutes

June 12, 2023 // PSESD, 800 Oakesdale Ave SW, Renton and Zoom

- **Networking – 11:00am – 11:30am**, Nisqually Room, 1st Floor
- **Meeting & Lunch – 11:45am**, Nisqually Room, 1st Floor

Executive Board

President

Marcia Henkle, NCESD 171

President Elect

Terry Brandon, ESD 123

Members

June Sine	NEWESD 101
James Sebree	ESD 105
Darlene Stickel	ESD 112
Dale McDaniel	CRESD 113
Cliff Huenergard	OESD 114
Mehret	
Tekle-Awarun	PSESD 121
Terry Brandon	ESD 123
Marcia Henkle	NCESD 171
Merle Kirkley	NWESD 189

Superintendents

Rob Roettger	NEWESD 101
Kevin Chase	ESD 105
Tim Merlino	ESD 112
Dana Anderson	ESD 113
Aaron Leavell	OESD 114
John Welch	PSESD121
Steve McCullough	ESD 123
Michelle Price	NCESD 171
Larry Francois	NWESD 189

Legislative Liaison

Melissa Gombosky

Executive Director,

AESD/OSPI Network

Jessica Vavrus

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Executive Board Members Present: June Sine, James Sebree, Darlene Stickel (virtual), Dale McDaniel, Cliff Huenergard, Mehret Tekle-Awarun (virtual), Merle Kirkley

Superintendents Present: Kevin Chase, Tim Merlino, Dana Anderson, Aaron Leavell, John Welch, Steve McCullough, Michelle Price, Larry Francois

Staff: Jessica Vavrus, Shayna Burmeister

Consultants: Melissa Gombosky

Absent: Marcia Henkle, Terry Brandon

I. Welcome

Introductions, Pledge of Allegiance, Review of Agenda

Lead: President Emeritus Merle Kirkley

Merle Kirkley called the meeting to order at 12:45pm and led the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance, introductions, and a review of the agenda.

[Meeting materials can be found here.](#)

II. Consent Agenda

Actions to approve agenda for 6/12/23 Executive Board meeting, the minutes from the 4/14/2023 Annual Business meeting minutes and the 3/13/23 Executive Board meeting minutes.

Lead: Executive Board Member Merle Kirkley

James Sebree motioned to approve the 6/12/23 agenda and 3/13/2023 AESD Board meeting minutes. Dale McDaniel seconded the motion. The 6/12/23 agenda and 3/13/2023 AESD Board meeting minutes are approved.

Dale McDaniel motioned to approve the 4/14/2023 Annual Business meeting minutes. James Sebree seconded the motion. The Annual Business meeting minutes are approved.

III. Legislative Updates & AESD Priorities

Lead: Melissa Gombosky

Melissa opened by explaining that session wrapped up on April 23, 2023 and lawmakers left Olympia to reconnect with their communities. With elections on the horizon, those who have decided to run, can now return to campaigning. Governor Inslee has formally announced he will not run for another term.

With that, it is expected that Attorney General, Bob Ferguson, will put his hat in the ring. Which, if successful, will open the AG seat. Right now, there is a fair amount of rumor as the focus now shifts towards campaigns.

The budget environment was challenging, and when forecasted state revenues were reported to have declined, the focus seemed to shift to the headline topics of housing, homelessness, behavioral health, public safety and healthcare access.

As for the impact to education:

- This legislative session did see significant investments in special education funding. And as a high priority, Special Education did receive an infusion of new money. There is a cap on how much state-level funding is provided for special education services which assumes no more than 13.5% of a school district's student body will need special education services. Many districts have more special-needs students than they receive funding for. Which results in local districts being unable to provide appropriate educational services to all the special needs students in their district. Or local districts are forced to use the money raised through local levies to pay for special education services.
- It appeared many legislators are making the connections between K-12 funding pressures and are committed to making education a priority. In addition, the headline issues impacting education include behavioral and mental health, education achievement gaps between race and workforce shortages.

IV. 2023 Annual Conference Reflections & Debrief **Leads: Jessica Vavrus, Dana Anderson, John Welch**

Jessica debriefed the 2023 Annual Conference.

- There were approximately 100 attendees at the event.
- There were 27 members in attendance at the Annual Business Meeting.
- There was a shortfall of \$6,729.21. This deficit will be covered by the co-hosts, ESD 113 and ESD 121.

Based on feedback collected, the conference committee will look at the placement of where the Annual Business meeting would best fit. This will be a topic of discussion for the planning of the 2024 Annual Conference agenda.

Jessica highlighted that maintaining the current number of sponsors and seeking additional sponsorships/partnerships will give AESD the funding boost needed for the conference to be fully funded. This year was an anomaly with the event being the first in person conference since the Covid years. The conference committee was able to work at reducing costs from what was originally negotiated. And, for future events, will continue to focus on cost/benefit of expenses.

- It is the time to recruit volunteers for 2024 Annual Conference committee.

Jessica opened the conversation and asked for additional reflections from those present.

Merle reflected that the Business Meeting occurring on the last day, may make it difficult to get the attendance that is desired. Especially when the last day is scheduled for four hours. He pointed out that at past events, the raffle baskets were a hot item. And including more raffle items along with changing the day of the meeting may help drive better attendance.

The group discussed:

- The potential of having the last day a full day or choosing to insert the Business Meeting at a different place in the agenda.
- Special consideration when the conference is on the west side of the state, most people would like to be on the road before noon.
- Kudos were given to the two host ESDs by those in attendance. Awesome job!

Merle posed these two questions,

- Do we believe there is an appetite to continue to have an annual conference?"
- Have we considered tying on to WASDA? Or another large event?

Jessica shared that she has talked with her peers. That some tie their event to a school board conference, with the ESDs coming together during the day prior. Another option would be having space held for ESD Board sessions at WASDA. And/or considering having a virtual event.

Jessica asked that the Executive Board connect with their board members about their preferences and possible ideas. There was consensus from the group to look at doing the event in conjunction with another entity, beginning with the 2025 Annual Conference.

- The group commented that networking is the benefit received when attending conferences and events. And the primary focus of the AESD Annual Conference should provide networking opportunities with other board members.
- Merle and Jessica commented that this opportunity and focus will strengthen the network.

The conversation turned to suggesting creative meet ups highlighting places in and around each ESD which would give board members an opportunity to learn about the areas, limitations, strengths and more about each other. In a non-sterile "meeting" environment.

Dale saw this year's conference as the *beginning of a trend line*. An opportunity to start something new with the prior three-year gap due to Covid. Dale commented that many board members and attendees have never been to an AESD Annual Conference. Dale shared that he believed this year's conference, "felt brand new."

- It may be time to start over and rebrand.

Merle suggested a subcommittee be set up to coordinate and solicit ideas from all board members. Michelle would like to see the subcommittee formed to develop the big picture of the event. Answering the questions from the board members, "What do you want? What are your needs? And what can the AESD do to best support you? Merle asked for additional thought and consideration from the group for a future agenda topic.

Gathering feedback from conference attendees was a priority, though most people did not participate. This will be an ongoing exercise that is implemented strategically throughout the year.

With the hope that people will feel comfortable sharing their opinions and offering ideas.
[Conference Reflections & Suggestions](#)

Sponsorships/Event Budget

Because sponsorships can ebb and flow and are not a guarantee, Dale commented that looking at additional ways of generating revenue will be necessary long-term. Especially if partnering with another group for timing/location of the Annual Conference.

Jessica shared that she is looking at ways to involve sponsors throughout the year. This would provide more benefit and partnership opportunities than is offered at the conference. Jessica also shared that the sponsor levels and benefits will be reviewed and updated prior to solicitation during late summer 2023. John has agreed to review the sponsor list and provide input on who will be outreached to for 2024 and suggested outreach to sponsors during late July/early August due to timing of setting budgets.

V. AESD Redesign Work:

Leads: Jessica Vavrus, Michelle Price, All

- a. **Updated AESD Constitution & Next Steps w/Association Strategic Direction:** The Constitution updates are complete. The ESD 113 Communication's Team is working on reformatting and adding the front matter with AESD map and contacts within the document. In addition, the work has started on the redesign of the AESD website. During this process, questions will be asked:
- What do you as board members want to learn more about?
 - How can the AESD Executive Board support you?
 - What would you as an Executive Board member like to think about regarding connections and learning opportunities.

Jessica explained that the answers to these questions will help drive the conversation on the budget.

Strategic Direction:

The group consensus was to focus on networking opportunities. Merle explained that it is hard to define our role with AESD to newcomers. We need to explain. What we do legislatively. What we do with programs. And find ways to pull people together.

John suggested meet up opportunities such as breakfast, social hours, and developing arranged time where networking could occur. Michelle asked if supplying Guiding Questions to the Superintendent Boards would help to collect their feedback on this topic. The group discussed using technology for meet up options. As an example, doing brown bag lunch virtual learning/networking events, thematic lunches. And using them to lead up to the annual conference.

Kevin suggested kicking off the conference by doing a networking event the day before. In 2024, there are many opportunities in Chelan. Kevin also suggested creating opportunities to gather. As an example, doing a fall tour. Visit places in and around ESDs. Get to know each other and the area by having the networking opportunity casual, fun and informal to develop a different kind of professional relationship.

It was also suggested that related to the strategic plan, the committee could contemplate “what’s next?” What goals and strategies apply to the association now that the detangling has occurred. How do you want to keep alive the outward facing network goals and relationships?
Action: Guiding questions will be developed and go out before August, so that the ESDs have them for their upcoming Board meetings.

b. AESD Association Budget Planning
Leads: John Welch & Jessica Vavrus

John and Jessica explained that dues were adopted. And the ESD 113 will be the administrative ESD.

John voiced that expenditure space is wide open on how you to direct funding. John pointed out that Joan is interested in what “we” want. We do have a voice. AESA dues for all ESDs collectively is between \$8,000-\$8,500/year.

Questions to be answered as we move forward for the AESD Annual Conference regarding revenue and cost sharing:

- Do we have a position moving forward on covering overage costs? Will it always be the host ESDs covering?

An ESD may have to cover the cost but may not have a say in how the money was spent. Jessica explained that this year was an anomaly with agreements made during Covid years. Michelle commented that deep discounts come with committing to the same place year after year. Michelle also pointed out that we can look at different options for venues if we decide not to pair up with another group beginning in 2025. Jessica pointed out that additional costs were incurred due to last minute cancellations that fell to AESD to cover, rather than to the attendee. Additionally, food counts were based on figures at cutoff, so we paid for more food than needed.

- Do we want a baseline for a specific number of registrations? ESDs vary in number of attendees they send. Could we look at covering all costs by dividing the cost by how many attendees each ESD sends?
- Accreditation. The more we can build AESD across the state the better it is for everybody.

VI. 2023/24 Proposed Exec Board Meeting Schedule
Lead: Jessica Vavrus

Jessica reviewed the proposed meeting schedule for the AESD Executive Board. James Sebree motioned to approve the proposed AESD Executive Board meeting schedule as presented. Dale McDaniel seconded the motion. The AESD Executive Board meeting schedule for September 2023-August 2024 is approved. Calendar invites will go out immediately.

Jessica posed the question about continuing virtual options for meetings. The group asked for Marcia and Terry to weigh in on the topic. There is a benefit of being able to attend virtually. The

conversation supported that in person would be preferable for networking. However, virtual attendance does have a place. The topic will be covered at a future meeting.

VII. Good of the Order & Upcoming

Lead: Merle Kirkley / All

The group members collectively and individually thanked Dana for his role at ESD 113 as well as his support of the network and AESD. A roundtable provided the opportunity for the attendees to give individual ESD updates.

VIII. Adjourn

President Emeritus Merle Kirkley adjourned the meeting at 1:40p

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