

Executive Board

President

Terry Brandon, ESD 123

President Elect

Dale McDaniel, CRESO 113

Members

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

Superintendents

Rob Roettger	NEWESD 101
Shane Backlund	ESD 105
Tim Merlino	ESD 112
Flip Herndon	ESD 113
Aaron Leavell	OESD 114
John Welch	PSESD121
Steve McCullough	ESD 123
Michelle Price	NCESD 171
Ismael "Ish"	
Vivanco	NWESD 189

AESD Staff

Jessica Vavrus, Exec. Director
Melissa Gombosky, Legislative
Liaison
Shayna Burmeister, Assistant

Meeting Minutes

Executive Board Members Present: Terry Brandon,

Dale McDaniel, Ann Byrnes, Darlene Stickel, James Sebree, June Sine, Marcia Henkle, Mehret Tekle-Awarun, Merle Kirkley (virtual).

Superintendents Present: Aaron Leavell, John Welch, Ismael Vivanco, Michelle Price, Tim Merlino, Rob Roettger, Shane Backlund, Steve McCullough.

Staff Present: Jessica Vavrus, Melissa Gombosky, Shayna Burmeister (virtual)

Welcome

Lead: President, Terry Brandon

Welcome, Introductions, [Pledge of Allegiance](#), Review of agenda

I. **Consent Agenda**

Lead: President, Terry Brandon

For Reference: [11/21/24 meeting minutes \(draft\)](#) | [Today's Meeting Materials](#)

Marcia Henkle moved to adopt the 1/13/25 agenda and 11/21/24 AESD Executive Board meeting minutes. Ann Byrnes seconded the motion. The 1/13/25 agenda and 11/21/24 AESD Executive Board meeting minutes were adopted.

II. **ESD Hot Topics, Updates, & Top of Mind Discussion (around the table)**

This time is for Executive Board members and ESD superintendents to elevate important topics of interest and relevance for group learning and discussion.

a. **District financial health updates**

- i. The group talked about the successes that are being seen with the districts in binding conditions and the teams in place helping them navigate getting back on track. And the need to focus on continued transparency.
- ii. Discussion also included the potential impact of another significant increase to insurance rates after the recent California wildfires.

b. **District transitions and anticipated superintendent vacancies**

- i. The superintendents did a round robin, discussing the anticipated school board superintendent vacancies. The group shared the short-term and long-term impact of these continued changes and the challenges that need to be addressed.

c. **Navigating Artificial Intelligence** – as a board and ESD organizations, including update on February AI Innovation Summit [AI Summit Web Site](#)

- i. Jessica Vavrus reminded the group that the AI Summit is hosted by a partnership of five statewide organizations (WASA, WSSDA, AWSP, WSIPC, AESD), along with OSPI. Registrations options include one day/half or three-day options. Sessions are available for support roles such as fiscal and human resources. With capacity for up to 450 individuals across all three days, the planning committee is leaning on ESDs to get the word out.
- ii. The group discussed current priorities around use of AI and how to effectively build internal AI policies and procedures to support staff and

learn. The collective topics being discussed at each of the ESDs include being intentional and observant with how to use AI for internal efficiencies.

- iii. Additional discussion covered the costs and benefits of AI; and how ESDs are ensuring the correct people are in place to “test the system.” Overall the group agreed that as boards they are supportive of exploratory efforts to learn about and use AI.

III. 2025 Annual Conference Updates

Lead: June Sine, Rob Roettger, Jessica Vavrus

For Reference: [2025 Draft Program](#) | [2025 Conference Web Site](#)

a. Program Updates

Jessica highlighted the details of the Wednesday afternoon Pre-Conference learning session. OSPI’s Office of Native Education is customizing the session specifically for the conference and ESD Boards. Lunch will be served at noon, and the learning session will be held from 1 PM-4 PM on April 16, 2025. Jessica asked to have the learning session highlighted with the ESD Board Members at upcoming ESD Board meetings.

b. Breakout session updates (see new [conference at-a-glance](#)).

The group reviewed the updated conference agenda. And reviewed the final agreed upon breakout session topics.

c. ESD Snapshots Showcase follow-up

Details of the video making process are still being discussed. The team is exploring the most cost-effective way to support the videos, along with parameters for the ESDs in developing them. These videos will be shared as a PSA style highlight in the conference slide show, during breaks and prior to conference sessions.

d. Registration process & upcoming communications

Detailed information for registration, lodging and planning purposes will be sent out on January 15, 2025.

e. Award of Distinction Committee & Nomination Timeline

- i. Jessica briefly reviewed the [timeline & process](#) for 2025 Award of Distinction. The agreed goal is to have at least one nomination from each region. This year ESD 112 will be selecting, purchasing, framing and labeling the winning artwork. This is a line item in the annual conference budget.
- ii. This year, June Sine, Marcia Henkle, Terry Brandon and Dale McDaniel will be the subcommittee representatives. This group will meet to review nominations at 8 AM on March 11, 2025, prior to the AESD Executive Board meeting which begins 9:30 AM. Additional information and rubrics will be sent to the subcommittee on March 7, 2025.

IV. Legislative Updates & AESD Priorities (2:00pm)

Lead: Melissa Gombosky

For Reference: [1/13/25 Legislative Update](#) | [AESD Legislative Priorities Website](#) | [AESD Behavioral Health Request to OFM](#) | [AESD 2025 Legislative Platform](#) | [2025 AESD Behavioral Health 1-Pager](#)

Melissa Gombosky discussed the legislative environment for 2025. With the following four points. Democrats have large majorities, priority issues across the board are housing, public safety, childcare and school funding, a large budget deficit of between \$12-\$15 billion and a large focus on revenue package discussions.

The AESD Network Priority will remain focused on expanding behavioral and mental health investments for students. Continuing to use seven times and seven ways to communicate with lawmakers and sharing letters of support from school districts in addition to recognizing that the paramount duty of the state is to serve our students.

Melissa reviewed Governor Ferguson’s budget priorities for this session and broke down the state’s budget deficit.

V. AESD Updates

a. Accreditation

Lead: Ismael Vivanco

For Reference: [Link to 9/17/24 overview](#) | [AESD Accreditation Web Site](#) | **2025 Dates:** May 13-15 (Tumwater) & May 19-20 (Spokane)

Dr. Ismael Vivanco shared an update on the 2025 accreditation panels. Panel facilitators are needed for both the east and west panels, and panelists are needed in the east. If you are interested, please reach out to Krista Johnson. Another update will be provided in March

VI. Good of the Order & Upcoming

Lead: Terry Brandon / All

Terry thanked those who presented at the AESA Annual Conference in December 2024.

A link was shared to the slides Superintendent Herndon will be speaking to in the House Ed Work Session tomorrow, January 14, 2025: https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1GktrRSIUPVx_JDb7VM3p5z1-UeAKIM8c/edit?usp=sharing&oid=103317395429725811510&rtpof=true&sd=true

VII. Adjourn

Terry adjourned the meeting at 2:05 PM