



Executive Board

President

Terry Brandon, ESD 123

President Elect

Dale McDaniel, CRESD 113

Members

June Sine	NEWESD 101
James Sebree	ESD 105
Darlene Stickel	ESD 112
Dale McDaniel	CRESD 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

Executive Board Members Present: Terry Brandon (ESD 123), Ann Byrnes (OESD 114), Darlene Stickel (ESD 112) (virtual), June Sine (NEWESD 101) (virtual), Marcia Henkle (NCESD 171), Mehret Tekle-Awarun (PSESD 121).

Executive Board Members Absent: James Sebree (ESD 105), Dale McDaniel (CRESD 113), Merle Kirkley (NWESD 189)

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

Staff Present: Jessica Vavrus, Melissa Gombosky, Shayna Burmeister

Welcome

President Terry Brandon called the meeting to order at 12:00 PM, led attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance, introductions, and a review of the agenda.

I. Consent Agenda

Lead: President, Terry Brandon

For Reference: [6/11/24 meeting minutes \(draft\)](#) | [Today's Meeting Materials](#)

Marcia moved to approve the 9/17/24 agenda and 6/11/24 AESD Executive Board meeting minutes. Ann Byrnes seconded the motion. The 9/17/24 agenda and 6/11/2024 AESD Executive Board meeting minutes were approved.

II. Legislative Updates & AESD Priorities

Lead: Melissa Gombosky

[Link to Legislative Update Slides](#)

Melissa Gombosky shared legislative highlights, information about the political context of the legislature, the AESD and school district legislative priorities and potential impacts of the ballot initiatives on school districts.

Melissa shared that lawmakers are discussing budgets and are heavily focused on political campaigns. Funding Priorities from legislative leadership are likely to be Housing, Medicaid reimbursement, Childcare, Behavior and Mental health, and K12 education.

The AESD Network is focused on behavior and Mental Health work, Career Connected Learning and Transportation Coordinators. And school districts are focused on the Constitutional Obligations of the State with Special Education, Basic Materials, Supplies and Operating Costs (MSOC) and Transportation being the Big 3.

K12 System Improvements

In addition to fully funding basic education, the current school funding model does not address the needs of what it takes to fully fund a comprehensive system for our state's young people. OSPI is requesting additional funds from the legislature for K12 system improvements to address the state's most pressing needs.

Melissa explained that any legislative commitment will require waiting to see how the ballot initiatives play out. In Washington State, there is a direct nexus between collection of Capital Gains Tax and the health of Washington schools.

III. ESD Hot Topics & Top of Mind Discussion (around the table)

- a. District financial health updates: A Financial Oversight Committee has been assigned to provide enhanced oversight to Marysville School District moving forward. A “Special Administrator” will also be hired to monitor the work moving forward. The Oversight Committee consists of two ESD fiscal officers and OSPI. In addition to regular updates on districts currently in binding conditions, the group agreed to continue to discuss/elevate strategies to support other struggling districts.

IV. AESD Updates

a. Accreditation (AESD Network)

Lead: Ismael Vivanco

For Reference: [2024/25 Accreditation Summary](#) | [2023 White Paper: The Value of the Accreditation Process](#)

Ish covered the accreditation process. And led the group through discussions.

b. 2025 Conference Updates

Lead: June Sine/Rob Roettger, Jessica Vavrus

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

Jessica provided an update on the work done by the conference committee and highlighted the 2025 Conference Web Site. Jessica explained that the committee is working on details for learning sessions, opening registration prior to the end of the year and exploring adding an afternoon session on day one. The committee has begun conversations with keynote speakers, planning for student involvement and securing entertainment for the receptions. Rob and June provided updates on anticipated speakers and entertainment.

c. AI Innovation Summit Collaboration

Lead: Jessica Vavrus, Michelle Price

For Reference: [AI Summit Web Site](#)

Michelle shared that enrollment for the AI Innovation Summit being held in Spokane has been low. The partner organizations sharing in getting in front of the AI work include OSPI, AWSP, WASA, WSSDA, and WSIPC. With the focus being to align with the six tenants that ODPI has set for the state regarding educators preparing students to understand and use AI tools.

Attendees are a mix of school board member teams and teacher teams. With Job Alike teams coming together on day 2. The AI Innovation Committee is considering what support will be needed beyond the summit and looking to the attendees to share their thoughts on this topic. Future Summit opportunities may include opening registrations up to people outside of the State of Washington.

d. Statewide Initiative Updates

Lead: Jessica Vavrus, Michelle Price

For Reference: [AESD BH-SAP Executive Summary](#)

Behavioral Health

The AESD Behavioral Health Student Assistance Program (BH-SAP) was established using federal ESSER dollars in 2020-21. Maintaining the funding continues to be an AESD legislative priority. Meetings and presentations are being set with legislators for the 2025 session. The group discussed how best to share the message that ESDs are saving lives by doing this work. It will be necessary to restore lost ESSER funding so that additional therapeutic and intervention services can expand. The group talked about the

need for the funding to be flexible as well as the need for clinical mental health treatment.

Region 16 Comprehensive Center:

The five year Region 16 grant that includes the partnership between Alaska, Oregon and Washington, concludes on September 30, 2024. In June, the current R16CC consortium (Alaska’s SERRC, Oregon’s OAESD, and Washington’s AESD) submitted a proposal for the next five-year cycle to serve as the Region 11 Comprehensive Center. For the next cycle, the comprehensive center program nationally was reconfigured into 14 comprehensive centers, rather than 19; and includes four new content centers and one national center. Federal funding for the new grant cycle would begin on October 1, 2024. At the time of this meeting, we have yet to hear whether we will receive the award. The current staff members working under the Region 16 grant will be given a two-month cushion with the closeout being approved to extend to November 30, 2024. We are continuing to work while we wait for the award announcement. Understanding that, if for some reason we are not an awardee, the work over the next two months will be focused on how to preserve the artifacts that have been developed over the last five years. Ensuring a robust website.

V. AESA Updates

Lead: Terry Brandon, Jessica Vavrus, Michelle Price

For Reference: [Summary of 2024 WA-AESD Presentations at Annual Conference](#)

President Terry Brandon highlighted the three presentations that were submitted for presentation at the AESA Annual Conference in December.

VI. Good of the Order & Upcoming

Lead: Terry Brandon / All

President Terry Brandon led the group in a round robin conversation that highlighted activities at each of the nine ESDs.

VII. Adjourn

President Terry Brandon adjourned the meeting at 1:45 PM