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BY CISCO GOMEZ, PRESIDENT



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Every Role Matters. Every Person Makes a Difference.

In racing, success is never achieved by the driver alone. Behind every successful lap is a pit crew working together with trust, precision, and a shared purpose. From the person changing a tire or fueling the car to the crew member tightening the final bolt, every role matters. Each person has a responsibility, and the success of the entire team depends on everyone doing their part.

I believe the same is true in our world of school facilities and operations.

Every day, across Washington, WAMOA members work behind the scenes to keep our schools safe, functional, and ready for students and staff. Whether your role is in maintenance, grounds, custodial services, capital projects, nutrition, or administration, your work makes a difference. Much of what we do goes unnoticed, and the demands of our jobs can sometimes make it difficult to see the impact of our efforts.

When we are focused on the task in front of us, it is easy to develop tunnel vision. We can become so consumed by the next work order, project deadline, unexpected repair, or challenge that we lose sight of the bigger picture. We may even find ourselves asking, "Why does this matter?"

That is when leadership matters most.

A good pit crew leader understands that the job is not simply to direct the team and get the car back on the track. It is also to know when to pull back the curtain and remind everyone why their work is important. Sometimes, people need to see beyond their individual task to understand how their contribution supports the entire team. Leadership is about building trust, recognizing the value in others, and helping people reconnect with the purpose behind their work.

As leaders, we may not always have every answer, and we certainly cannot do everything ourselves. But we can listen, encourage, recognize, and support the people who make our teams successful. We can create an environment where every person understands that their contribution matters and that they do not have to face every challenge alone.

This is one of the things I value most about WAMOA. We have an opportunity to be that pit crew for one another. Through our shared experiences, professional development, and willingness to help a fellow member, we remind each other that we are part of something bigger than our individual districts or job responsibilities. We may serve different communities and face different challenges, but we share a common purpose: supporting the schools and students who depend on us.

Our recent annual conference was a wonderful example of what teamwork can accomplish. I want to extend a sincere thank-you to everyone who contributed to making it such a success. A special thank-you goes to Cherie, Alicia, Katie and Makenna the

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entire golf and conference committee for the tremendous time, energy, and care they invested in making a memorable event. The planning and preparation behind an event like this take commitment, and their efforts deserve to be recognized. I am grateful to work alongside people who make WAMOA a stronger organization for all to enjoy and develop some new skills.

I also want to express my appreciation to our Education Partners. Your continued support of WAMOA and our events throughout the year helps create opportunities for our members to learn, connect, and grow professionally. Your partnership is an important part of what makes our organization successful, and we are grateful for the relationships we continue to build together.

As we move forward, I encourage each of you to take a moment to recognize the people on your own team. Thank the person who always shows up, the colleague who quietly solves problems, the team member who steps in when things get difficult, and the leader who reminds everyone why the work matters. Never underestimate the impact a few words of appreciation or encouragement can have on someone who needs to hear them and don't forget to thank your leader for allowing you to continue your professional development (thanks Shelly!!!).

I am honored to serve this organization, and I recognize that WAMOA's strength does not come from any one individual. It comes from all of you, our members, volunteers, committees, Education Partners, and everyone who gives their time and energy to support our shared mission.

Remember, if you want to go fast, go alone. But if you want to go far, you need a pit crew beside you. Trust one another, do your best, and help your teammates see the difference they make. When the work gets difficult or the finish line seems far away, remember that every role matters, every person makes a difference, and we are always stronger when we work together.

That's the power of WAMOA.

With gratitude,

Cisco

Cisco Gomez
President, WAMOA











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BY TINA WERNER, COMMUNICATIONS LEAD FOR WSDOT'S
MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT TEAMS

The Nuts and Bolts of WSDOT Winter Preparations

Before the first snowflake falls, mechanics, maintenance technicians and area superintendents with the Washington State Department of Transportation are already preparing for winter.

Travelers see the plows on the road once a storm arrives, but they may not see the months of planning, training, equipment maintenance and material preparation that make that response possible.

For WSDOT, winter operations is a year-round effort. During warmer months, crews maintain highways, repair equipment and safety features like guardrails and signs and plan for the winter ahead.

Each fall crews meet and train for the winter ahead, including familiarizing themselves with routes and vehicle specifics. Calibration training teaches crews how to effectively use and dispense salt and other products. Then there are the materials. Every fall, massive pallets of salt arrive by barge in the Pacific Northwest. Last year, crews applied 1.2 million gallons of liquid de-icer in the winter months, the same volume is anticipated this year.



Crews learn about liquid pumps and proper technique for snow and ice application during pre-winter training.

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A mechanic replaces broken equipment called "king pins" on a rig used to fight winter storms.

The People Behind Winter Operations

About 1,500 highway maintenance workers, from Chehalis to Pullman, are directly involved in snow and ice operations on state highways in Washington. Their jobs go beyond driving the 511 snowplows and 20 snowblowers WSDOT owns.

Maintenance crews work around the clock to operate and maintain equipment, prepare and manage materials, maintain highways and coordinate with law enforcement and tow operators during winter storms. Mechanics work behind the scenes to keep equipment running so crews can respond when conditions worsen. We call our mechanics "force multipliers" because the rest of the winter work hinges on having plows and other vehicles available.

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When a mountain pass closes, it affects everyone – travelers, freight haulers, businesses and people taking medical trips. This closure of I-90 Snoqualmie Pass lasted for hours while crews cleaned up and towed vehicles.

Storm Ready

When the snow and ice arrive, WSDOT crews are ready to respond, but much of what the public experiences is due to unprepared or distracted drivers. Mountain pass closures happen every winter for a variety of reasons, including spinouts, crashes, intoxicated drivers and avalanche control. A single spinout can close an entire pass and affect everyone traveling through the area. A major crash can take even longer to clear, particularly when specialized tow equipment is needed or fuel is spilled.

Swarming the Storm

When a storm hits, we shift people and equipment to where the need is greatest – a strategy we call "swarming the storm." If a plow isn't on your route at a given moment, chances are it's clearing another critical area or heading your way. Most snowplows cover anywhere from 40 to 100 miles of roadway per day, and they have to take it slow for safety and applying salt products. The goal is to keep goods and people moving and make the best use of available resources as conditions change.

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A worker opens a box that holds 12 explosives. The explosives can be triggered from far away to cause a controlled avalanche.

Safer, Smarter Winters Ahead

WSDOT recently made improvements to avalanche operations on Snoqualmie Pass, ending the use of artillery to trigger controlled avalanches. The new Remote Avalanche Control system uses remotely denotated explosives and is a major step forward in keeping Snoqualmie Pass safer. By triggering avalanches when snow levels are high, crews can help prevent uncontrolled avalanches from reaching the road.

Know Before You Go: Personal Winter Prep

There are several steps the public can take to help make winter travel smoother.

Before heading out, drivers should get a winter maintenance check-up. Check your tires, battery, belts, hoses, brakes, radiator and wipers. Talk to your tire dealer about which tires best match your vehicle and winter driving needs. Follow any traction or chain up requirements when posted.

And please, slow down around snowplows and crews responding to crashes. They are people just like you and want to get home to their loved ones at the end of every shift.

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BY ANDREW BALMER, CCP, COMMISSIONING MANAGER
AND SAMANTHA WONG, AIA, LEED-AP BD+C, SÄZÄN GROUP INC.

Building Envelope Considerations

From OPR through Operations and Maintenance

Even before the selection of design teams, Districts should be considering Building Envelope requirements as a critical component of the Owner's Project Requirements (OPR) development process. Building Enclosure systems project every other building system not only within a building but influence the performance of infrastructure systems external to the building as well. The OPR is the owner's proactive, written statement of what a building needs to do and how it should perform, and it should guide design teams even before they begin the design process. Unfortunately, without an OPR or updated Design Guidelines, building owners may be forced to a more reactionary approach, relying upon a single design team for enclosure-related decisions, or the envelope is treated as a standalone element because its connections to other building systems are not fully understood or have not been explicitly considered. When asked about HVAC and related control systems, a building owner can often recount numerous occupant comfort complaints because temperature, humidity, and air movement are readily experienced, felt and understood. The building enclosure, although the most visible component of the construction process may not necessarily provide the most obvious contributions to occupant discomfort, energy use, financial loss, maintenance costs, and premature deterioration.

What does an OPR actually mean when it calls for "envelope performance goals"? On the surface, the answer seems straightforward: provide a weather-resistant barrier, protect and shelter occupants, maintain reasonable comfort, and perform for an appropriate service life. A more pragmatic approach is to consider the building enclosure in the context of the building's other systems and disciplines. Doing so can identify practical adjustments that improve overall project performance and reduce long-term risk.

The building enclosure is a complex, highly integrated system that intersects with nearly every design discipline on a construction project. A thoughtful, systematic approach to enclosure design can have a significant impact not only on aesthetics and durability, but also on occupant comfort, moisture control, energy performance, maintenance requirements, constructability, and construction cost. For school Districts that will own and maintain a building for 50 years or more, those impacts add up.

> In an industry where even small installation errors can lead to costly consequences, Building Envelope Commissioning (BECx) helps identify issues early, before they are repeated across the project or hidden behind completed assemblies.

Consider how each discipline interacts with the enclosure. The placement, orientation, size, and quantity of windows and glazing directly influence solar heat gain, daylighting, heating, and cooling loads, and consequently the capacity and electrical requirements of mechanical systems. Canopies, overhangs, shading devices, and façade features can provide solar control and improve occupant comfort during warmer months, potentially reducing the mechanical energy required to maintain interior conditions.

Creating opportunities for an integrated photovoltaic layout on the roof or façade can provide an on-site power generation while also introducing shading and weather-protection. Similarly, the selection and placement of HVAC and electrical equipment can have important enclosure implications. Locating equipment within a mechanical attic or mezzanine rather than on the roof, where practical, can reduce the number of roof penetrations, equipment supports, curbs, and associated flashing and drainage details. Each avoided penetration can reduce opportunities for air leakage, water intrusion, thermal bridging, and condensation.

Thoughtful consideration should also be given to overall project intent. Aesthetics and design quality are important to building owners, but they should be balanced with durability, constructability, maintainability, and performance where necessary. Design features that introduce discontinuities in enclosure control layers, complex fenestration interfaces, difficult-to-access components, or unproven construction methodologies can increase the risk of premature failure and long-term maintenance costs. The objective should not be to limit design expression, but to ensure that design intent is supported by an enclosure strategy capable of achieving the desired performance.

A design team's rendering may communicate an idealized structure that appears to align perfectly with the vision for a facility. However, closer examination of each element should consider how it will be constructed, how water will be managed, how the air and thermal barriers will remain continuous, how materials will accommodate movement, how components will be maintained, and how interfaces between systems will perform over time.

The OPR provides an opportunity to establish these expectations before design decisions become difficult or expensive to change. By identifying enclosure performance goals early and considering the enclosure as an integrated component of the building rather than an isolated design system, the project team can better align aesthetics, energy performance, occupant comfort, durability, constructability, and long-term ownership costs. Additionally, a constructability review, a workshop designed to collect consensus from a team of independent disciplinary experts is a cost-effective means of exploring decisions made in the design process and their impacts on one another.

Of course, establishing a standard or set of guidelines only matters if the building envelope is constructed as intended—and that is where building envelope commissioning (BECx) plays a critical role. BECx provides an independent, third-party process for verification and quality assurance, creating a system of checks and balances throughout design, construction, and turnover. BECx is considered an Enhanced Commissioning option under the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED v4.1 sustainability protocol. The BECx

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provider reviews submittals, observes installation, and verifies performance to help ensure that the work aligns with the owner's OPR, contract documents, the Basis of Design (BOD), manufacturers' recommendations, and industry best practices. In an industry where even small installation errors can lead to costly consequences, BECx helps identify issues early, before they are repeated across the project or hidden behind completed assemblies. During turnover, the BECx provider also verifies the completion of O&M training requirements, turnover of systems O&M manuals, as-built accuracy, warranty information, and long-term maintenance needs—supporting not only a successful project closeout, but the continued performance and durability of the building envelope.

Consider the outline below as a starting point for your District when reviewing, renovating, or for new construction. It follows the order of a typical project, from planning through closeout.

BUILDING ENVELOPE CHECKLIST FOR SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Before Design

- Bring an enclosure consultant and BECx provider onto the team before schematic design and keep them involved through construction.
- Write envelope goals and reference District Design Guidelines in the OPR, including expected service life for the roof, walls, and windows and how each will be maintained.
- Share leak history, failed products, and problem details from your existing buildings with the design team.

District Standards

- Preferred and prohibited roofing, window, and sealant systems
- Standard details for common trouble spots: roof-to-wall transitions, window heads and sills, rooftop curbs and penetrations, and door thresholds
- Roof warranty requirements
- Safe maintenance access to roofs, gutters, and glazing

Design Review

- Have the enclosure consultant and BECx provider review the drawings at each design phase, not just at

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construction documents.
- Make sure the water, air, and thermal barriers can be traced continuously around the building on the drawings.
- Look for ways to reduce rooftop equipment and roof penetrations.
- Check that glazing amounts and orientation are coordinated with the mechanical design.
- For complex design features, ask how they will be built, kept watertight, and maintained.
- Hold a constructability review around design development.

Construction
- Include BECx in the project scope. ASTM E2813 and NIBS Guideline 3 are good references.
- Have the enclosure consultant and BECx provider review envelope submittals.
- Build and test mockups, with BECx witnessing and verifying performance, especially windows, before full installation.
- Schedule field observations before envelope systems become concealed by finishes.
- Witness and verify Air Barrier testing.

Operations and Maintenance
- Collect as-builts and warranties for the roof, walls, windows, and doors.
- Set up a maintenance schedule for roof inspections and sealant replacement.
- Walk the envelope with the contractor before warranties expire.
- Review window and door perimeters for failed gaskets, sealant deterioration, condensation, drafts, or water staining.
- Keep roof drains, gutters, and downspouts clear of debris.
- Maintain positive drainage away from the building at grade.
- Track recurring leak locations and investigate the source rather than repeatedly patching interior finishes.
- Keep a building envelope log with inspection dates, photos, leak reports, repairs, products used, and warranties.



BY COURTNEY CLARK



Why Giving Up Is a Good Thing

Simone Biles is "a shame to the country" and a "selfish sociopath" according to one political media personality. After gold medal-winning gymnast Biles withdrew from competing in several events at the Tokyo Olympics, the angry pundit went on to accuse Americans of "raising a generation of weak people like Simone Biles."

Biles opted out of several events at the 2020 Games after experiencing something called "the twisties," where a gymnast loses their sense of direction during aerial maneuvers. Despite its cutesy name, the twisties is an incredibly dangerous condition that can cause an athlete serious injury if they continue to compete without their typical sense of special awareness. Biles said at the time that she was pulling out of events to preserve her safety and well-being, as well as avoid an injury that would keep her from competing in the future.

Olympic fans were disappointed not to be able to root for Biles, but most seemed to understand. If Biles preserves herself in the moment, she can compete better later, they reasoned. "Quitting" here would mean the ability to win more in the future. It made sense (not to the pundit above, but to most sensible people.)

In the "Grit Resilience vs. Growth Resilience" national research study, we found 58% of working Americans think being able to quit on a goal is an undervalued strength. And 75% say that someone who gives up on a goal is NOT a failure!

The good news is that the vast majority of us seem to understand that sometimes it makes sense to let go of something. We found in our research that 74% of people believe having too much grit causes people to miss opportunities and not adapt to other paths. Like Simone Biles, we're willing to strategically quit if there's the promise of a larger payoff in the future.

It seems like we get it. But do we really?

Maybe not. Because the study also found a large statistical difference between what we know to be true, and what we're willing to do about it. Despite ranking "adaptability" as one of the top qualities that helps you be successful in life, the survey respondents ranked behaviors like "creating other plans" and "knowing when to quit" at the very bottom of successful traits.

What that finding means is that we may believe strongly in the IDEA of adaptability, but we aren't willing to embrace the BEHAVIORS that adaptability requires. We support the concept, but not the reality.

Stop-timism

Think about it like chores: do you want your house to be clean? Probably so. It's pretty nice to have a tidy environment. But do you want to actually do the work of cleaning your house? Most people enjoy that part a heck of a lot less. You may want to be healthier, fitter, or skinnier, but you dread the exercise or diet it's going to require. You may want to be better at your hobby or more well-read, but you just can't find the time to invest. You crave the end result, but you're not excited about the effort it takes to get there. We've all been there!

Much like house cleaning, when it comes to adaptability there's a big gap between what we WANT, and what we want to DO. We know we *should* be adaptable and open to change, but when it comes down to actually doing it, those old cultural judgements pop into our head with warnings like "quitters never win," and "if you believe it you can achieve it."

With that outdated messaging resonating through our heads, no wonder working Americans ranked behaviors like "persistence," "grit,"



and even "relentless optimism" as more important to achieving success than knowing when to quit or coming up with other ways to achieve goals. If a proven winner like Simone Biles can be attacked for stopping for her own safety, it's obvious the world is still clinging to a toxic positivity culture that idolizes pushing through at all costs.

What if you could maintain a positive attitude while *also* being willing to let go of what's not working?

If that sounds good to you, let me introduce you to Stoptimism™.

> "When one door closes, another door opens, but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us."
> *-Alexander Graham Bell*

Stoptimism (a mashup of "stop" and "optimism") is the mindset that allows you to embrace strategically stopping as a key driver of future success rather than a failure. With Stoptimism, you can pause, pivot, and change without any of the psychological baggage that typically comes with "giving up."

Stoptimism isn't easy to develop. There are lots of forces that keep you relying on grit: family expectations, leadership pressures, and the sheer volume of cultural reliance on perseverence as the #1 advice for success. But Stoptimism is critical for success in a world where the goalposts are always shifting. Can you imagine being part of a company where they value the ability to stop pursuing dead-end projects?

Who Adapts Faster?

In our research, we challenged study respondents to think deeply about the pros and cons of perseverance. So who is better at adapting to change, and who struggles with it?

We found important demographic differences in behavior and beliefs. Men are significantly more likely than women to believe grit (82% vs. 75%) and relentless optimism (77% vs. 70%) are important to achieving success in life. And men report

—continued



respecting leaders (like teachers or religious advisors) in their life more if they have more grit, while women report that they have more respect for those same people if they show higher adaptability than grit.

In many measures in the study, men leaned higher on the grit side of the grit vs. growth pendulum than women. Both women and men in the study reported that women seem to be better than men at prioritizing which goals are most important to pursue, which plays a key role in flexible goal-setting and adapting.

Age is also a contributing factor to behavior around perseverance. The baby boomer generation is significantly more likely than all other generations to rate goal-setting (97%) and persistence (97%) as important for success in life. Boomers also surround themselves with other grit-inclined people: Boomers (61%) are significantly more likely than Gen Z (51%) and Millennials (46%) to rate their best role model or mentor very strong in their level of grit.

But while the Baby Boomer generation may be more inclined to lean into grit, they also have a superpower when it comes to adapting: they've got years of experience with life not going the way they planned. While Boomers ranked highest in grit, they *also* ranked the highest in trusting themselves to come up with other options if their original plans don't work out.



The Leadership Problem

More than even gender or age, there's one demographic category whose choices and beliefs about perseverance could have the greatest impact: leaders. Our study found that people-leaders (anyone who has one or more team members who report to them) are significantly less likely than non-people-leaders to refuse to give up on a goal even if the goal is impossible to achieve. They also were less likely to quit on a goal even if they realized they no longer wanted to achieve the goal. So they'd persist in an impossible goal or a goal they don't even value anymore!

Perhaps most importantly, 65% of working Americans believe leaders should be fired if they are unable to adapt to new business environments. Willingness (and ability) to change is considered a critical business function in today's quickly evolving environment. Leaders who can only rely on grit and haven't flexed their growth muscle are only accomplishing half of what they should be doing.

For everyone, leader or not, there's a problematic gap between the desire to be adaptable and the ability TO adapt. Despite the issue being blamed on how hard change is or how unwilling people are to change, the real problem appears to be that inflexibility to change isn't caused by unwillingness, but by not knowing how to overcome the cultural hurdles brought on by generations of grit. The real problem isn't an attitude problem, but a skills problem.

The truth? There's not only ONE way to be successful. There's not only ONE acceptable outcome of any given situation. There's not only ONE version of winning. When you can give up what's not working, you'll be able to innovate a new way to succeed.

Courtney Clark teaches teams to adapt faster and achieve more. She is a recognized change resilience strategist and the author of four books, including her most recent bestseller "The Short Cut." Courtney is a four-time cancer survivor, a brain aneurysm survivor, keynote speaker, and founder of a nonprofit. Trusted by dozens of Fortune 100 companies, Courtney delivers practical, data-driven strategies that create lasting transformation. CourtneyClark.com

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School Tour: Harrington SD

On September 28, 2026, Sen. Mark Schoesler (R-Ritzville) visited Harrington SD as part of WAMOA's facilitated legislative school tours. Shown above is the Harrington SD, which enrolls 122 P-12 students, including ECEAP preschool regular and special education students. Originally built in the 1950's, the community passed a bond issue in 1993 which installed roof mounted heaters. This HVAC system was again updated in 2019. For a building of its age, it is extremely well-maintained. There's lots of natural light which makes for a pleasant environment. The building is quite secure, as visitors need to be buzzed in by the main office. The football field and playground are quite well maintained, and a perimeter fence secures the campus. The district received an emergency grant to improve their plumbing needs, and several windows and siding near the football field need to be replaced. The students complete athletically in a sports coop with Sprague / Harrington / Lind / Ritzville and Washtucna.

The students are offered a strong Career and Technical Education program, including horticulture, welding, wood, metal and science. The district houses a full size swimming pool, which was built during the Depression, and plans to upgrade the pool when funding is available. The gym is very well maintained as well. The group observed a very positive school climate, with respect be the Character Quality of the Month. Particularly positive is the relationship between students, staff and the administration. All on the tour would agree that Harrington SD is a great place for students to learn.



From left: Mark Brown, OSPI financial coordinator; Mitch Denning, WAMOA consultant; Courtney Strozyk, superintendent / principal; Sen. Schoesler; Jerry Page, industrial hygienist, NEW ESD 101, and WAMOA representative; Veronica Perez, EA WA coordinator, OSPI schools and facilities organization; Britany Wagner, member, Harrington SD board of directors; Rob Roetther, NEW ESD 101 superintendent.



School Tour: Sprague SD

On September 28, 2026, Sen. Mark Schoesler (R-Ritzville) visited Sprague SD as part of WAMOA's facilitated legislative school tours. Shown above is Sprague High School, which houses 22 students. In addition, Sprague Elementary School also houses 24 students in grades K-5. The district also operates a locally-funded preschool program.

Sprague HS was built in the 1970's, and has had no major upgrades. It has lots of carpets and natural light. There are several windows and a skylight that need to be replaced. The district received a Small District Modernization Grant funded the resurfacing of the roof, provided LED lighting throughout most of the building, and funded a new HVAC system. Also, a Small Schools Energy Grant funded energy upgrades. From the Healthy Kids / Healthy Kids Grant they received funds to resurface their aging tennis courts, which delighted their community very much. The building is very secure as visitors are buzzed in, and the campus is completely fenced. They offer a comprehensive Career and Technical Program in Horticulture. In the cafeteria, they hold band and choir concerts. The gym is very well maintained because that portion of the building was constructed in 1960. However, the plumbing system is showing its age, and will require repairs and updates.

The students compete in a sports coop composed of Sprague, Harrington, Lind-Ritzville and Washtucna. Academically, students are able to enroll in Running Start at Eastern WA University in Cheney, and Spokane Community Colleges. Students can also take college courses in the College in the Classroom program. The group observed a very positive school climate, with Courage being the Character Trait of the Month. All on the tour agreed that Sprague High School is an excellent place to students to learn.



From left: Jerry Page, NEW ESD 101 industrial hygienist; Kyle Lepper, LPR Architecture, American Institute of Architects (AIAWA) representative; Mitch Denning, WAMOA consultant; Ray Leaver, superintendent / principal, Sprague Elementary and High Schools; Mark Brown, OSPI fiscal coordinator; Victoria Perez, EA WA OSPI coordinator, school facilities and organization; Melinda Canaday, business manager, Sprague SD; and Sen. Schoesler.



School Tour: Lamont SD

On September 28, 2026, Sen. Mark Schoesler (R-Ritzville) visited Lamont SD as part of WAMOA's facilitated legislative school tours. Shown above is Lamont Middle School, which houses 27 students in grades 5-8. Originally built in 1955 as a K-12 school district, in the fall of 1968 the high school students moved to Sprague High School, and the K-5 students moved to Sprague Elementary School at a later date. In terms of security, parents, community members and visitors are buzzed in by the main office. In addition to their basic education subjects, the students have an opportunity to choose to attend culinary arts, regular art and study skills. The group viewed an excellent gym. The district received an Urgent Repair Grant to upgrade their electrical systems, and new heaters were placed in the hallways. They also have a facility need for new doors, windows and flooring. The building has all tile floors, and there are no plans to install carpet. The group viewed a very positive school climate, as respect, welcoming, caring and personal support. Overall, the group agreed that Lamont Middle School is an excellent school for students to learn.



From left: Kyle Lepper, LPR Architecture, American Institute of Architects (AIAWA) representative; Veronica Perez, EA WA coordinator, OSPI schools and facilities organization; Jerry Page, NEWESD 101 industrial hygienist, and WAMOA representative; Shannon Hughes, superintendent / principal, Lamont SD; Sen. Schoesler; Janet Smith, business manager, Lamont SD; and Mitch Denning, WAMOA consultant.

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Immediate Past President: Devlin Piplic, Northshore S.D. dpiplic@nsd.org

Region Representatives & Regional Meetings

Region 1
Ned Wendle, Mead S.D., Cheryl McLean, Spokane Public Schools
Meetings: Third Thursday
ned.wendle@mead354.org, cherylm@spokaneschools.org

Region 2
Steven Randall, Goldendale S.D., Chris Harris, Selah S.D.
Meetings: Second Thursday
srandall@gsd404.org, chrisharris@selahschools.org

Region 3
Jason Ackley, Vancouver Public Schools, Jessica Beehner, Washougal SD
Meetings: Third Thursday
jason.ackley@vansd.org, jessica.beehner@washougal.org

Region 4
Frank Wilson, Olympia S.D., Travis Warren, Hoquiam S.D.
Meetings: Second Wednesday, 11:30am
fwilson@osd.wednet.edu, travis.warren@hoquiam.net

Region 5
Joan Moore, North Mason S.D., Justin Gray, Port Townsend S.D.
Meetings: Third Friday, 11:30am
jmoore@northmasonschools.org, jgray@ptschools.org

Region 6N
Julius Carter, Issaquah S.D., Co-chair - vacant
Meetings: Last Tuesday
carterj@issaquah.wednet.edu

Region 6S
John Boatman, Sumner-Bonney Lake SD
Michael Knaack, Tacoma Public Schools,
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john_boatman@sumnersd.org, mknaack@tacoma.k12.wa.us

Region 7
Britton Vanness, North Franklin S.D., Robert Martinez, Kennewick S.D.
Meetings: Third Wednesday, 12:00pm
bvanness@nfsd.org, robert.martinez@ksd.org

Region 8
Rosey Burkhard, Lake Chelan S.D., Jenny Payne, ESD 171
Meetings: Second Wednesday
burkhardr@chelanschools.org, jennyp@ncesd.org

Region 9
Trevor Bell, Everett Public Schools, Jeff Curtis, Everett Public Schools
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tbell2@everettsd.org, jcurtis@everettsd.org

Standing Committees

Governance, Compliance, Elections, & Programs
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Conference
Alicia Lawver, Tacoma Public Schools,
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Technical Advisory Committee
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REVVED UP
and Ready for the Road Ahead







As we look back on the 2026 WAMOA Fall Conference, our hearts are full.

This year's theme, REVVED UP, was a reminder that while the road ahead isn't always smooth, we move farther and faster when we travel it together. Inspired by the teamwork of a pit crew and the momentum of the racetrack, the conference celebrated what makes WAMOA special: connection, collaboration, and the willingness to support one another through every challenge and opportunity.

Over three days, we saw those values come to life. From the Tuesday night social and Wednesday reception to the trade show, workshops, meals, general sessions, and countless hallway conversations, members and partners came together to learn, laugh, share ideas, and build relationships.

When asked what they enjoyed most, attendees overwhelmingly pointed to the same thing: the connections. Networking, collaboration, educational workshops, engaging speakers, and the opportunity to learn from peers across Washington were mentioned again and again. That sense of community is at the heart of WAMOA and one of our greatest strengths.

Until next time, keep the engine running, stay connected, and we'll see you down the road.

Alicia, Katie & Makenna

SAVE THE DATE:
2027 Fall Conference
Oct. 6-8, 2027, Yakima, WA

Thank you to the 2026 WAMOA Fall Conference Committee for all their work!

Alicia Lawver (Chair) • Katie Granado (WAMOA Executive Director) • Makenna Reaves (WAMOA Membership & Marketing)
David Baird • Jessica Beehner • Travis Bown • Rosey Burkhard • Marc Elliott • Cisco Gomez • Paul Harrison • Jeff Hosler
Joan Moore • Ben Moore • Jeff Rogers • Bryce Williams

2026 WAMOA FOUNDERS AWARD

Nominated by Ned Wendle, Mead SD
Presented by: Katie Granado, WAMOA Executive Director

This year WAMOA had the honor of honoring **Travis Bown,** who has spent years promoting and supporting WAMOA initiatives and members.

I have to go back to 2015, my first year. It seems I essentially "voluntold" him—"Welcome to the WAMOA Board." I'm not sure either of us fully understood at the time what that nudge would lead to and thankfully he didn't run away!



Since then, he has served as a Regional Representative, Vice President, President, and most recently as our Legislative Representative. In every one of those roles, he has helped move this organization forward and has been a strong and consistent advocate for our members and for the work we do.

But what I appreciate most isn't just what he has accomplished. It's who he is.

He is kind and thoughtful. He listens — really listens — and when he speaks, people pay attention. He is an excellent communicator, a steady presence, and someone who has always approached difficult issues with thoughtfulness and respect.

Somewhere along the way, this board member also became a dear friend. And I think that is one of the greatest gifts of being involved in an organization like WAMOA — the people you meet and the relationships that grow along the way.

He has given countless hours, shared his knowledge, advocated for our profession, and helped shape WAMOA into the organization it is today. His impact will continue long after any particular position or title has ended.

We don't want to embarrass him too much, but he truly is a once-in-a-lifetime talent, and WAMOA is incredibly fortunate to have had his leadership and commitment.

So, with tremendous gratitude and appreciation for your years of service, leadership, friendship, and commitment to WAMOA, it is my honor to present you with the WAMOA Founders Award. Congratulations, and thank you for everything you have given to this organization.

TRADESHOW BOOTH WINNERS

This competition is becoming a favorite tradition! Thank you to all the vendors and individuals who brought their "Revved up" game to make this year extra festive.



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NEW OFFICERS

Congratulations to the newly elected 2027 officers! L to R President Cisco Gomez (Mukilteo SD), Secretary/ Treasurer Nicole Daltoso (Evergreen Public Schools), Vice President Michael Pauley (Aberdeen SD)



SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

BOC Scholarship winners Chris Harris, Selah SD (not pictured) and Michael Nygaard, College Place SD

GOLF RECAP

What a fantastic day on the golf course! Great weather, a great turnout, and even better company!

A huge thank you to our incredible golf committee and everyone who came out to support WAMOA's Grant and Scholarship programs. Thanks to your generosity the 2025 WAMOA Golf Tournament raised an amazing $16,244!

Your participation helps invest in the future of our industry and the next generation of school facilities professionals - one swing at a time!



We're grateful for this amazing WAMOA community and the difference you help make!

Golf Committee: Chair Cherie McNabb (FORBO), Co-chair Ben Moore (WCP Solutions), Bryce Williams (NWAP) and many other day of volunteers.



THANK YOU PARTNERS!

The 2026 WAMOA Trade Show was, as in past years, a great success. And it couldn't have happened without the support and participation of our Educational Partners. WAMOA thanks every one of them!

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Leadership 2027



Welcome to winter 2027 and all the fun that comes along with it, luckily for you I am not going to talk about that... Instead let's talk about LEADERSHIP 2027! We are excited to announce some significant changes for this year. We are moving from our wonderful Bavarian village experience to a fantastic mountain experience at Suncadia Resort. While we all loved our time in Leavenworth at the Enzian Inn we all knew the limitation of that space would eventually force us to seek other options. Leadership 2026 survey results showed us that you were tired of the cramped quarters, poorly working ventilation, and being stacked on top of each other. We thanked Enzian for all the wonderful years and went off seeking a new place for us. We found that in Roslyn at Suncadia Resort. They offer us ample room for our meetings, wonderful rooms to stay in, and amenities to keep us entertained.

Leadership 2027 is going to be an amazing time not only because of the changes mentioned above, but because by popular demand we are bringing Jahmad Canley back to continue the fantastic work he started with us last year. We all remember the lessons we learned when it comes to "scotoma" and how we work around that issue to make sure we see the whole picture. We will review our HABE's and if you don't remember that you better bust out your material from last year and review it. We all need help with challenging conversations and will explore the circumplex more this year. Jahmad will continue our journey to help us become better leaders to the people we serve in our districts.

As we face the challenges each district will come up against in the future the better trained, educated, and equipped we can be the better we can deal with life's challenges. Our leadership training is designed to give leaders the tools to be successful in life and your careers, so we hope to see you all there. As always our fantastic educational partners have provided us with ample scholarships opportunities to help you afford to attend this fantastic event. So please we know budgets are tight so take advantage of the funds we have available to support your professional development. See you all in Roslyn March 18-19, 2027, at Suncadia Resort.



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BY OLIVERA DOBRANIC, SENIOR RISK CONSULTANT, PSESD

Best Practices for Clean Schools

Guidance on Compliance, Staff Training, and Winter Preparation

Maintaining a clean and safe school environment is critical for the health and well-being of students, staff, and visitors. A clean school promotes hygiene, supports learning, and fosters a positive atmosphere. This article outlines best practices for keeping schools clean, compliance requirements, the benefits of having trained team members, and what initial and ongoing training should look like. Additionally, we will cover essential tips for snow cleanup and preparing for the winter season.

Importance of Clean Schools

A clean school environment not only helps prevent the spread of illnesses but also enhances the overall learning experience. Studies have shown that cleanliness directly correlates with lower absenteeism rates, higher student engagement, and improved academic performance. Furthermore, a clean school fosters a sense of pride among students and staff, building a positive school culture.

Compliance Requirements for Schools

Schools must comply with various federal, state, and local regulations regarding health and safety standards. Some key compliance requirements include:

- Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA): Schools need to adhere to OSHA regulations regarding workplace safety, which include maintaining clean and hazard-free environments.
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): The CDC provides guidelines on cleaning and disinfecting schools, focusing on the importance of routine cleaning and disinfection, especially considering contagious diseases such as COVID-19.
- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA): Compliance with EPA's guidelines for using environmentally safe cleaning products is essential. Schools should ensure that cleaning supplies are listed on the EPA's Safer Choice list.



- WA State Health Departments: Local health departments may have specific regulations regarding sanitation and school cleanliness, influencing the cleaning protocols schools should implement.
- Building Codes and Fire Safety Regulations: Keeping school buildings clean and well-maintained contributes to fire safety and adherence to local building codes.

Staying informed about compliance requirements is vital for schools to keep employees, students, and visitors safe and to foster a safe learning environment.

Best Practices for Clean Schools

- Create a Cleaning Schedule: Develop a comprehensive cleaning schedule that outlines daily, weekly, and monthly tasks. Include tasks such as:
  - » Daily cleaning of high-touch surfaces (doorknobs, light switches, desks)
  - » Weekly floor cleaning (vacuuming, mopping)
  - » Monthly deep cleaning (walls, windows)
- Use Effective and Safe Cleaning Products: Choose cleaning products that are effective against a range of pathogens while being safe for students and staff. Use eco-friendly options, when possible, to promote sustainability.
- Implement Waste Management Practices: Encourage proper waste disposal by providing accessible trash and recycling bins. Regularly empty bins to avoid overflow and consider implementing composting systems for organic waste where possible.
- Conduct Regular Inspections: Regular inspections can help identify areas that need attention. Having a checklist for maintenance and cleanliness can ensure that all areas of the school receive proper care and attention.

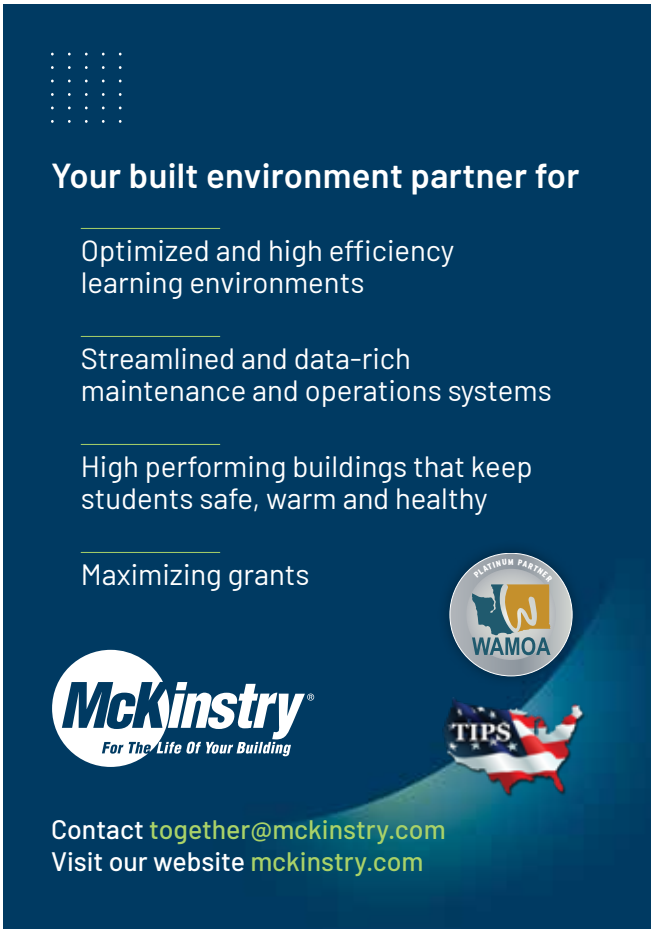
Invest in Team Member Training

Having custodial staff trained is essential for effective school cleanliness. Here are some benefits of investing in training:

- Improved Cleaning Techniques: Trained custodians are equipped with knowledge of the best practices for cleaning various surfaces and materials, ensuring that cleaning is thorough and effective.
- Enhanced Safety: Proper training reduces the risk of accidents and injuries related to cleaning, particularly when it comes to managing chemicals and using equipment such as floor cleaners.

—continued





Increased Employee Morale Investing in training shows that the school values its staff, leading to higher job satisfaction, lower turnover rates, and a more cohesive team.

- Better Hygiene Practices: Well-trained team members understand the importance of hygiene and can implement effective cleaning protocols that prevent the spread of germs and diseases.
- Initial and Continuous Training: Training for custodial staff should be both initial and continuous.

Initial Training

- Orientation: Introduce new custodial staff to the school environment, including layout and key areas of focus for cleanliness.
- Cleaning Procedures: Teach the proper cleaning procedures, including the use of specific cleaning products and equipment.
- Safety Training: Provide thorough training on safety protocols, managing hazardous materials, and emergency procedures.
- Hygiene Standards: Educate staff on hygiene standards and the significance of cleanliness in preventing diseases.

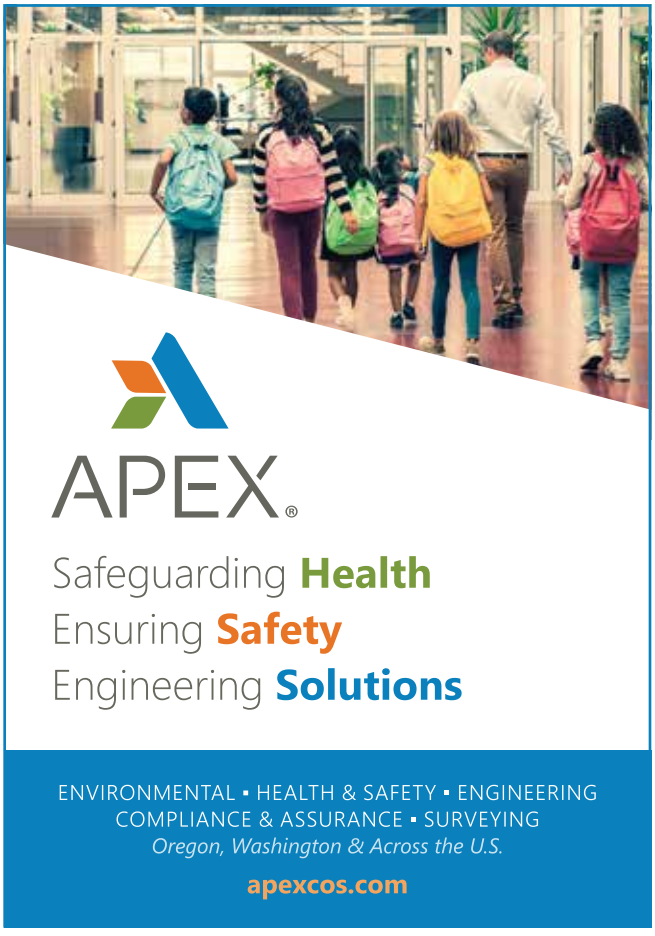
Ongoing Training

- Regular Workshops: Offer workshops on new cleaning products, techniques, and technology that can improve cleaning efficiency.
- Feedback Sessions: Regularly solicit feedback from custodial staff to identify areas where additional training or support may be needed.
- Updates on Compliance: Keep staff informed about any changes in compliance requirements and health guidelines to ensure they are always aligned with regulations.
- Peer Learning: Encourage experienced staff to mentor newer team members, fostering a culture of shared learning and continuous improvement.

Winter Preparation Snow Clean-up Tips

As winter approaches, schools must be prepared to address snow and ice removal efficiently. Here are some best practices:

- Create a Snow and Ice Removal Plan: Develop a clear plan for snow removal that outlines responsibilities, procedures, and resources needed. This plan should include:





  - » Prioritizing areas for snow removal, such as entrances, pathways, and emergency exits
  - » Designating specific staff members to be responsible for snow removal
- Invest in Quality Equipment: Ensure that the school has proper snow removal equipment, such as shovels, snow blowers, and ice melt. Regular maintenance of this equipment is crucial to ensure it functions properly when needed.
- Train Staff in Snow Removal Procedures: Train custodial staff on safe snow removal practices to prevent injuries. This includes proper lifting techniques and the use of equipment to clear pathways efficiently.
- Maintain Clear Communication: Communicate snow removal efforts to the school community. Announce school closures or delays promptly and provide updates on the status of snow cleanup efforts.
- Monitor Weather Conditions: Stay informed about weather forecasts to proactively prepare for snow events. This may include having staff on standby to begin snow removal early in the morning or even overnight.

Maintaining a clean school environment is a continuous partnership between teachers and custodial staff. This collaboration is vital for employee and student health, safety, and learning. By following best practices together, ensuring ongoing communication, complying with regulations, investing in trained staff, and preparing for seasonal changes like winter, schools can create an environment that supports academic achievement and student well-being. Schools that prioritize cleanliness and hygiene will reap the benefits overall, leading to a productive and thvriving educational atmosphere.

Resources

- » *Training Requirements and Resources | Occupational Safety and Health Administration*
- » *WA State DOH Health and Safety Guide for K-12 Schools*
- » *WA State DOH Infectious Disease and Control Schools Guide: doh.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2024-06/420-503-InfectiousDiseasesControlSchoolGuide.pdf*
- » *Using Chemicals and Cleaning Supplies at School | US EPA*
- » *Read the State School Environmental Health Guidelines | US EPA*

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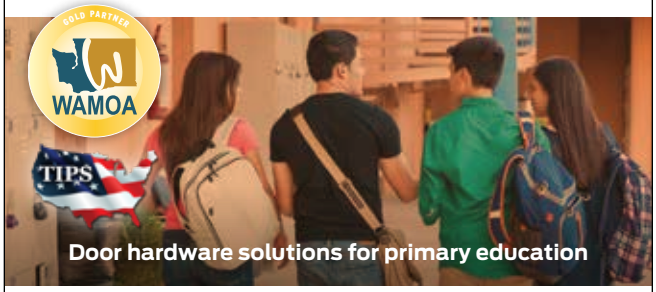
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LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Prepared by Mitch Denning, AEA Consultant

Alliance of Educational Associations
WA Assn of Maintenance and Operation Administrators
2026 Legislative Session Report
Revised 10/16/26

AEA 2026 Interim Plans - WAMOA

- Travis Bown and Mitch met with 28 senators and representatives during the session to share WAMOA's 2026 priorities, and most of them expressed interest in fall school visits. Senators include Sen. Ron Muzzall (R-Oak Harbor); Sen. Matt Boehnke (R-Kennewick); Sen. Leonard Christian (R-Spokane Valley); Sen. Mark Schoesler (R-Ritzville); Sen. Keith Wagoner (R-Sedro Wooley); Sen. Chris Gildon (R-Puyallup); Sen. Yasmin Trudeau (D-Tacoma), chair of Senate Capital Budget; and Sen. Nikki Torres (R-Pasco) (8 senators).
- Representatives include Rep. Carolyn Eslick (R-Sultan); Rep. Chris Stearns (D-Auburn); Rep. Lisa Callan (D-Issaquah); Rep. Alicia Rule (D-Blaine); Rep. Stephanie McClintock (R-Vancouver); Rep. Mari Leavitt (D-University Place); Rep. Peter Abbarno (R-Centralia); Rep. Jim Walsh (R-Aberdeen); Rep. Joel McEntire (R-Cathlamet); Rep. Mary Dye (R-Pomeroy); Rep. Kevin Waters (R-Stevenson); Rep. Omar Salahuddin (D-Kirkland); Rep. Janice Zahn (D-Kirkland), Rep. David Hackney (D-Tukwila); Rep. Stephanie Bernard (R-Pasco) and Nathasha Hill (D-Spokane) (17 representatives).
- On each of the legislative school visits, WAMOA invites a representative from OSPI school facilities and organization, and two partner associations, the Assn for Learning Environments (A4LE), a facility planners group, and the WA Chapter of the






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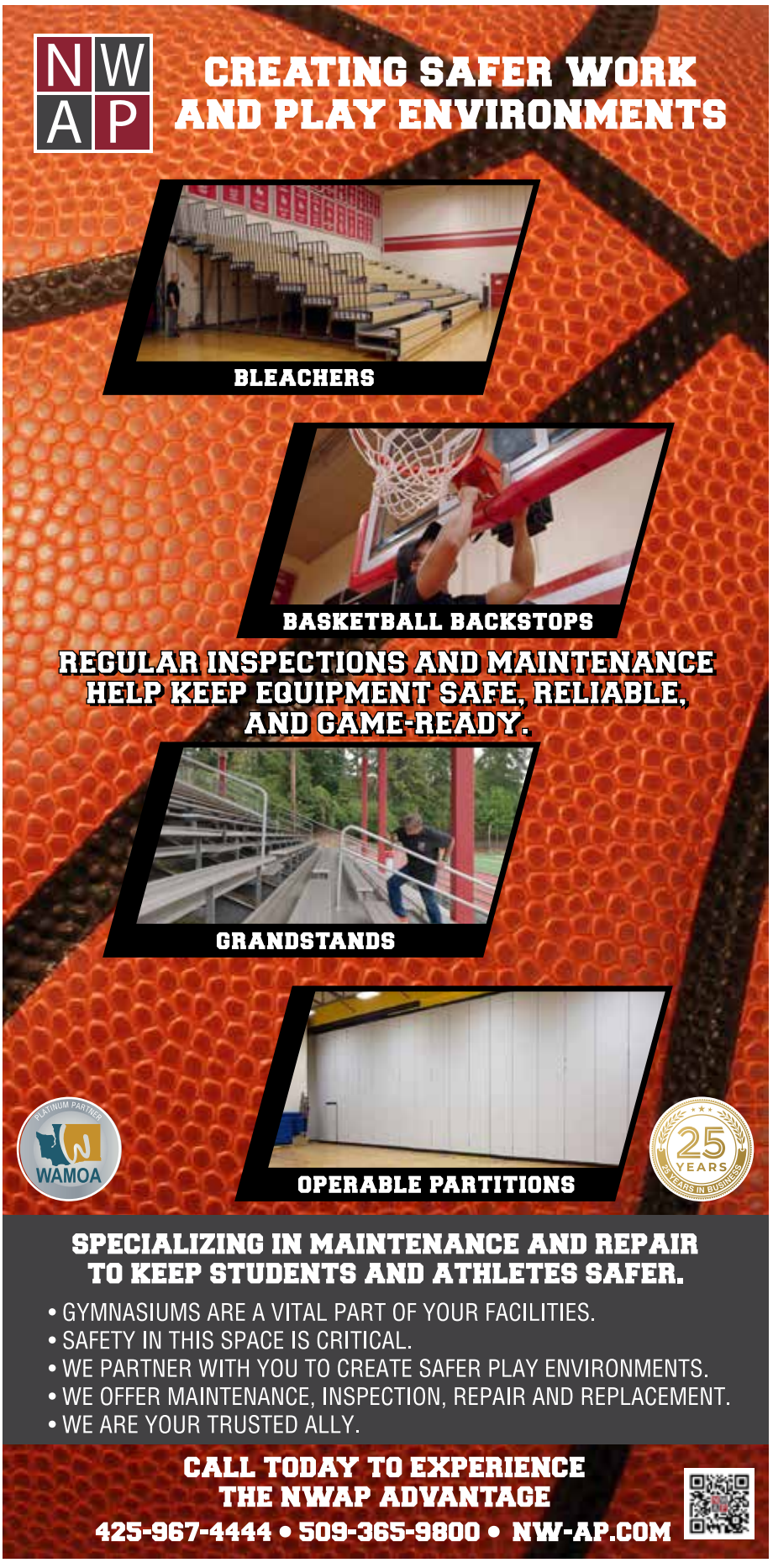
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American Institute of Architects (AIAWA). These individuals share their expertise as need on the school tours.

- On September 28, Sen. Schoesler toured Sprague / Lamont SDs and Harrington SD, with Jerry Page, NEW ESD 101, as the WAMOA representative; Mark Brown, OSPI fiscal coordinator; Veronica Perez, EA WA regional coordinator, OSPI school facilities and organization; Kyle Lepper, LPR Architecture, AIAWA.
- On October 1, Rep. Hill visited Yasuhara Middle School in Spokane Public Schools, with Cheryl McLean, custodial supervisor, Spokane PS, and the WAMOA representative; Travis Bown, director, maintenance and operations, Mead SD, as A4LE representative; Melissa McFadgen, NAC Architecture, AIAWA.
- On October 20, Rep. Leavitt will tour University Place SD, with Jason Lowery, as the WAMOA representative; Tyler Muench, OSPI senior advisor for external affairs to the superintendent; Shona Bose, McGranahan PBK, AIAWA.
- On October 22, Rep. Stearns will visit Kent SD, with Steve Fairbanks, ass't director, environmental services, as the WAMOA representative; Heidi Burkart, OSPI NW regional coordinator, OSPI school facilities and organization has been invited; and Stephen Black, Aetta Architects, AIAWA.
- On October 27, Rep. Rule will tour Meridian SD, with Kevin Burke, Lynden SD, as the WAMOA representative; Burkart from OSPI; Jed Bellew, Zervas Architects, AIAWA.

—continued



- On November 9, Reps. Walsh and McEntire will visit Adna and Pe Ell SDs, with Derek McMillion, Chehalis SD, as the WAMOA representative; Muench from OSPI.
- On November 17, Rep. Waters will tour Evergreen SD, with Nicole Daltoso, as the WAMOA representative; Muench from OSPI; Don Luthardt, Aetta Architecture, AIAWA.

Tours still to be scheduled are Rep. Zahn, Rep. McClintock, Rep. Abbarno and Sen. Gildon.

On September 15, Travis Bown, Cisco Gomez and Mitch met with Sen. Curtis King (R-Yakima) and James Crandall, Senate Republican Caucus, to discuss whether or not Sen. King would run ESSB 5694, statewide boiler operator certification in the 2027 session. Travis and Cisco described their district situations re: boiler inspections. Both members indicated that they had successful programs through their insurance pools, and agreed that a duplication of efforts that the bill would add to districts' responsibilities was not necessary.

Mitch added that with limited resources projected for the K-12 portion of 2027-29 operating budget, that funding MSOC and special education were higher priorities that certified boiler operators. In addition, he shared that eight school districts, with a ninth one just added, were on binding conditions with financial oversight of OSPI and ESDs. OSPI indicated that the number will probably grow to eleven districts, the most districts on binding conditions in any one school year.

Sen. King stated that he reviewed his notes from the bill which died in 2025 in House Appropriations. He also made several contacts in Spokane regarding the bill. Then said that he would not run the bill in 2027, and probably wouldn't entertain moving it forward again, as there are many other issues that need to be tackled prior to adding more governmental oversight to school districts' plates.

Mitch has reached out to meet with IUOE who requested the bill in 2025, and shared with them that Sen. King was not going to run the bill in 2027. He's not heard back from them.



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