



Washington State Association of School Psychologists

Scope Online Newsletter February, 2002

Welcome to the email version of [Scope Online Newsletter](#)!

Would you prefer to receive a monthly [Scope Online Newsletter](#)? Would you prefer to read this publication online? Many of you indicated at the fall conference that you would prefer the e-mail version of the [Scope](#), so we are piloting an email version of the [Scope Online Newsletter](#). The current newsletter, along with past issues, will also be posted on the membership only section of the website, password, "Skinner." E-mail us your thoughts (see e-mail address below).

Do you know a school psychologist who might be interested in joining WSASP? Be sure to forward this to other school psychologists, special education directors, and vendors who you think might be interested in joining WSASP.

If you HAVE received this newsletter from a friend and would like to try out our newsletter free of charge, for a limited time, prior to joining WSASP in the March, 2002, please e-mail your complete contact information (name, position, school district, work phone and e-mail address) to Jennifer McIntire at corymcintyre3@attbi.com.

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Message from the President

Written by Gail Hasbrouck, M.Ed., NCSP

I hope that everyone's year is off to a safe start! For the last eight years, the WSASP office has been located in Olympia at the home of Kim Bahrenburg. In November of this past year, Kim resigned as our Association's office manager. The WSASP board and the Association members thank Kim for her years of dedicated service to the Association and wishes her the best. The board is reviewing several proposals for office management, and a final decision regarding the location of the new office will be made at the next board meeting on February 23rd.

Regarding the focus of the Association, the board continues to concentrate on the three goals that were identified by the strategic planning group in August, 2001:

- *Communicate effectively within our board, with our members, and with the public.*
- *Recruit and retain members and their active participation in the organization.*
- *Advance the standards of the profession of member school psychologists.*

The Fall Conference in Olympia had a great turnout of 240 school psychologists. Conference evaluations showed that the program was very well received.

"Howard Knoff's workshop made me rethink my approach to school-wide behavior support"

"Eric Johnson's break out session was well done"

"I enjoyed having the binder with all the notes"
"Asperger's presentation and SRSD were both excellent!"
"Dr Schrank- excellent and funny!"
"SRSD- exciting to hear future directions!"
"Dr. Chris Ladish's presentation was outstanding."

In addition to the program evaluation, 165 participants completed a luncheon survey on organizational and operational issues. Results indicated that some members have not heard about area meetings and do not know how to contact their area representative. Several of the areas encompass many districts and are spread out geographically. However, even for smaller areas, communication across districts and regions is definitely a challenge. We hope that the new area representative website page will assist area representatives and members to increase their communications. Committee information is posted on the website, along with position papers, helpful links, events and updates, membership information, and a chat room for members. Check out WSASP's new website at <http://www.wsasp.net>.

The Ethics and Professional Practices Committee is actively seeking participation and input from members on issues of concern. This Committee will work closely with the WSASP Recruitment and Retention Committee and the WEA Task Force on Recruitment and Retention of ESAs. The WEA Task Force is developing potential legislation and recommendations for the WEA spring general assembly. This group has taken a strong position in support of professional best practices. A Special Education Representative Assembly Task Force survey will be mailed to the home of all identified WEA member school psychologists by February 15. It is critical that you complete and return this survey so that the task force has data for the RA.

The Assessment Review Committee has a new position paper on, "Equity in State Assessment." This position paper is timely and promises to be of high interest to all educational professionals. The draft position paper and input form is posted on the Members Only section of the website. The WSASP board and Assessment Review Committee value your comments and suggestions. To access the Members Only section of the website, use the password, "*Skinner*."

Finally, regarding membership, it is critical that we all share in the responsibility of promoting our profession. WSASP membership declined last year without a state Association advocating for children's mental health and educational services and promoting the profession of school psychology, we will not be at the table to have our voices heard on issues that impact children and our jobs. For members who have supported WSASP for many years, please know that nonmembers are receiving the benefits of our advocacy work. During our membership drive this spring, please encourage a colleague to join the

Association. Those joining any time in March will receive membership benefits from March, 2002 through June 30, 2003. *Happy New Year!*

Thank you to Jocelyn A. McCabe, Director of Communications, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, for inspiring the development of our new [Scope Online Newsletter!](#)

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WSASP launches new Web site

The Washington State Association of School Psychologists (WSASP) is pleased to announce the launch of its new Web site at www.wsasp.net. The site offers a wealth of online information about WSASP, as well as:

- Updates and Alerts
- Position Papers
- Crisis Response
- Employment
- Interventions
- Links
- Events
- Membership Information

WSASP is committed to promoting the educational and mental health needs of all children.

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Meeting the Needs of the 21st Century

Report on the WSASP Fall Conference by Nancy Allbaugh

Sitting in my office on Wednesday, October 31st, the phone rings, the inbox chimes, the door swings open, the files pile up and I'm thinking I must be crazy to be taking off this afternoon and leaving my work for two whole days. In my car driving over the mountains on Halloween eve, I'm thinking I must be crazy to drive clear to Olympia leaving the comfort of my home and my family, spending my hard earned money to attend the pre-conference workshop and conference since my budget has been spent on other items already this year. However, I feel a responsibility to the association to make the trip and uphold the commitments I made earlier this summer -- so to the wet side I go.

Things look brighter on Thursday morning as I head off to hear Dr. Howard Knoff speak on the topic, "Creating Safe Schools." His presentation is a synopsis of a national model prevention program called Project ACHIEVE. Dr.

Knoff recently received national recognition for this model, which uses the *Stop and Think Social Skills* program. The information was presented in a lively and informative manner and I thought about the programs in my elementary schools and how we might improve on what we already have in place. I jot them down to share with the staff. Over lunch, I'm lucky enough to join a group with Dr. Knoff and talk about the weather in Florida versus Washington and what's new in school reform and school psychology. I'm thinking maybe I wasn't so crazy to get out of the Tri-Cities. After the workshop I chat with old friends and unfortunately I miss the late afternoon reception, but I know I'll catch the one on Friday night.

Friday morning I make it in time for the breakfast and the keynote address by Pamela Eakes, founder of Mothers Against Violence in America. Mrs. Eakes expressed excitement in addressing a group of school psychologist because she indicated that she has not had this opportunity in the past. It was great to hear from someone outside of the field on such a controversial topic. Mrs. Eakes discussed the physical and mental stress that early start time has on our middle and high school students. She shared the results of a recent study in districts in Minnesota where the start time was changed to later in the morning. I'm on the district calendar committee for the Richland Education Association and I'm thinking of how to share the information I've gained with the other members. Administrators love data!

The two workshops I picked for Friday couldn't have been a better choice for me. Dr. Chris Ladish, Coordinator of the Pediatric Neuropsychology Program at Mary Bridge Children's Hospital, gave an excellent presentation on concussions and mild traumatic brain injury and reintegration to school following those injuries. Her presentation skills were excellent and at a level that held the interest of the professionals in the room. I'm thinking the whole time how I can apply this information to an assessment I've just begun on a limited English speaking student with a suspected brain injury in one of my schools. At the end of the presentation I chatted with Dr. Ladish for a moment and she gave me her card and said to give her a call for some assessment ideas. I'm starting to think the time invested in making this trip to Olympia might really be time saving in the long run.

The general meeting during lunch was a great time to learn what was going on in the association. Many gifts were raffled off along with a message from our President, Gail Hasbrouck. I want to give special recognition to members of the conference committee for a beautiful luncheon. The announcement of the School Psychologist of the Year, Ande Stritmatter from Wahluke School District, was a highlight. I'm thinking what an inspiration he is to others in our field. I want to go back and be an inspiration too.

The second workshop of the day was *Multi-cultural Assessment* by Julie Brown from the Portland area. This was a three-hour presentation that flew by with lots of good discussion regarding cognitive and academic assessment. I'm thinking how this information will help me with the aforementioned student. I have just spent the day receiving training on topics I can take back and use on Monday. The other psychologists in my district will appreciate the handouts from this workshop.

It was a great day, but the social hour at five was really the time to connect with old friends and relax. Circulating and chatting, making dinner plans, discussing the workshops, and sharing war stories – all the side benefits of a great conference. I'm not sure how many people we packed around two tables at the Outback but I do know our voices carried over the music with a lively discussion on life as school psychologists.

Saturday morning, Dr. Fredrick Schrank, Executive Director of the Woodcock-Munoz Foundation, explained the psychometric framework for the Woodcock Johnson-III. Workshops followed his presentation and I chose to learn about the KEYS project from Pat Steinburg of the Washington Education Association. I always try to attend Pat's presentations that are always informative and usually spiced with that special humor which is hers alone. I think about how this school reform project could work in my district.

There were other sessions that I didn't get to attend, of course. I heard great things about the Student Responsive Delivery System update by Mary Browning and Jodi Sheppard and the Asperger Syndrome presentation by Dr. Felice Orlich.

The morning ended with a quick meeting of our WSASP executive board and I am on the road again. With a four and one half-hour drive ahead of me, I think about the past several days. I think about the assessment with my ESL student and how much more information I have at my disposal. I think about how I am going to share what I have learned with my fellow psychologists. I think about what a good investment in time and money this conference was for me. I think about the great turnout we had, but regret that all our WSASP members couldn't attend. I think I may be a couple of days behind on reports, but I am days ahead in my professional growth. For this I would like to add a thank you to our association for offering me this unique opportunity.

PS. Remember November, 2002 for the WSASP conference in Yakima.

Nancy Allbaugh, School Psychologist

Area 10 WSASP Co-rep, Richland School District

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Suicide Prevention in the Schools

Ralph E. Cash, Ph.D., NCSP
NASP Health Care Initiative
Libby Kuffner Nealis
NASP Director of Public Policy
Edited by Gail Hasbrouck, M.Ed., NCSP

Worldwide suicide is among the ten leading causes of death each year and among the top five in the 15 to 19 age group (World Health Organization (WHO), 2001). In 1996 suicide was the ninth leading cause of mortality in the United States, responsible for nearly 31,000 deaths (approximately 85 each day). Each year in the United States, approximately 500,000 people require emergency room treatment as a result of attempted suicide (McCraig & Strussman, 1997). More teenagers and young adults die from suicide than from cancer, heart disease, AIDS, birth defects, stroke, pneumonia, influenza, and chronic lung disease *combined* (Oklahoma Youth Suicide Prevention Task Force, 1999).

In an effort to focus our nation, United States Surgeon General, Dr. David Satcher, issued the *Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent Suicide* in 1999 and the *National Strategy for Suicide Prevention* in 2001. Surgeon General Satcher has not only been an advocate for suicide prevention, but for awareness of mental illness and mental health services. His pioneering Report on Mental Health (1999) made an unprecedented statement regarding all aspects of mental illness treatment, incidence, and costs to society if not acknowledged and adequately addressed. This report led to the follow up, *Report of the Surgeon General's Conference on Children's Mental Health: An Action Agenda* (2000) and *Mental Health: Culture, Race and Ethnicity* (2001).

Given his role in suicide awareness and prevention, Surgeon General Satcher was called to testify before the Senate Subcommittee on Children and Families on the topic Teen and Adult Suicide, on September 7, 2001. Satcher pointed to the statistics discussed in his recommendations in both the "Call to Action" and "National Strategy" documents, and stressed to Congress the importance of promoting initiatives to implement these recommendations. Others who testified also stressed the need to reach more youth to identify warning signs of suicide and other mental health needs, and to address the needs as early as possible. The important roles schools play in the ability to reach these young people and provide services and referrals for treatment was all but on the tip of everybody's tongue, but this exact statement was not made explicitly clear.

There is still not a complete understanding of what school psychologists do everyday and can do to help address student mental health needs, involve parents, help train teachers and other school staff to recognize these needs and refer them to the proper professionals. We need your help in getting this message out and repeating it. It is incumbent upon members of the profession

to help educate congress and other policy makers, parents, and school and community leaders that school psychologists are a critical component to the solution. Again, what seems obvious to us in our everyday work is not clear to many who are searching for solutions. Continued advocacy is needed to educate school and government policy leaders of the importance of suicide awareness and prevention efforts, and stronger school-based mental health programs to help identify and respond to youth in need. The school-based mental health professionals must also be able to identify warning signs of suicide and help teachers and other school staff do the same.

Whenever feasible, the best approach to school-based suicide prevention is teamwork that includes teachers, school doctors, school nurses, school psychologists, school social workers, and school counselors working in close cooperation with community agencies (*Preventing Suicide: a Resource for Teachers and Other School Staff*, WHO, 2000).

NASP is currently working on Fact Sheets for Suicide Prevention and Depression in Adolescents and Young Children. We hope to make these available for use by school psychologists in their work with schools and families. If you have any recommendations for these fact sheets or any other questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Libby Kuffner Nealis, NASP Director of Public Policy, <Lnealis@naspweb.org>.

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2001 School Psychologist of the Year

WSASP honored Ande Stritmatter by presenting him with the 2001 School Psychologist of the Year Award at the Fall Conference in Olympia. In an interview Ande told us that when he goes into an evaluation, he tryst to understand what it must be like to be the student and face the issues presented in the formal education side of life. "If I'm able to get a glimpse of what life looks like at school through the student's eyes, then I might be able to explain those findings to the teacher(s) in such a way that life gets better for the teacher(s) and subsequently, for the student." Ande works closely with the teachers in the Warlike School District to help teachers to reach all students. According to Judith Williams, Middle School Teacher, National Award Recipient, Wahluke School District, "*Ande is the most innovative and supportive educator I've ever had the privilege and honor of working with during my twenty-two years in education.*"

Ande's innovative authentic learning program has been recognized at a national level by [Schools with Ideas that Work](#), a report prepared by the Office of Special Education Programs, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services, and United States Department of Education. According to the report,

"Wahluke's outstanding authentic learning program began as a vocational program for special education students and has become an inclusive program for students with and without disabilities. Located in an impoverished area with high unemployment, the school has a high population of migrant students and English language learners. The foundation of the school and the curriculum is based on the creation and running of student businesses encompassing all the basic skills required of all middle school students. However, learning takes place in a concrete and applied manner. Reading is done through the development of contracts or writing brochures. Math skills are developed through determining costs incurred or projecting profits. An advisory board of local businesses provides community support. The results for students have been exciting; students working and attaining skills and being successful. The model has been so successful the district is beginning to replicate a project in high school. Parents are delighted with the outcomes."

In addition to innovation, Ande is well known for his technical expertise. He combines traditional and non-traditional methodology to produce functional evaluations that identify the adverse impact of a student's disability along with suggestions for specially designed instruction and practical interventions for teachers.

Ande has worked as a school psychologist for over 30 years. He is married to Susan, who works with the deaf education program at DSHS in Yakima. He has three children and lives on a mini-ranch in Ellensburg where he breeds horses and nurtures other small creatures. From your students, friends, and associates, "thank you."

"The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes." Marcel Proust

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Congratulations to Nicole Labot, WSASP 2001 Minority Scholarship Recipient

Addressing the Diverse Needs of Students

Written by Nicole Labot

Seattle University School Psychology Student

As educators approach the 21st century they should be especially concerned with the great diversity represented in many, if not all, educational environments. Culturally and linguistically diverse students represent at least one-third of the total U.S. school population, as denoted by demographic figures. As a future educator, I am particularly concerned about the quality of care culturally and linguistically diverse students receive and educators' commitment

to the growth of these students. Ethical and reflective education leaders are needed to ensure the delivery of quality care for students from diverse backgrounds. My professional mission is to use the educational instruction I am receiving at Seattle University to render a higher quality of care to students with a renewed commitment to culturally linguistically diverse students.

In my professional practice, I am committed to student advocacy, diversity awareness, fair and equal treatment of all students, and school accountability. As an African American, I do, however, realize that oftentimes differences are interpreted as deficits and, consequently, results in lowered expectations for students of diverse backgrounds. Unfortunately, ignorance and lack of diversity training fuels such inequalities. Part of being prepared to provide quality service in diverse communities, as emphasized in Seattle University's School Psychology program, involves preparation in the area of diversity. I believe that the future is for a "prepared" educator. As a future school psychologist, I will advocate for a higher standard of care in assessment and placement of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

One way that I am accomplishing this in my professional training is by considering the degree to which a particular screening device accounts for a student's race, ethnicity, culture, and learning style. During my second year of graduate training, after feeling discouraged by the lack of culturally sensitive assessment instruments available in my program, I approached my professor and program coordinator to address the need for more culturally appropriate assessment procedures and instruments. The outcome was extremely positive and resulted in an increase in culturally and linguistically diverse assessment procedures in my program at Seattle University. When educators account for students' differences they are contributing positively to the growth of students. In essence, a readiness to serve in diverse communities means using one's sphere of influence to advocate for the needs of diverse clientele groups.

In addition, ethical and reflective educators need to have measures in place to gauge the effectiveness of their commitments to students. In my professional practice, I plan to utilize a variety of procedures to measure the extent to which my commitments are carried out. For instance, gathering empirical data within schools to examine higher placements for students, especially students of color will determine the extent to which educators are advocating for students. School psychologists must recognize that students of color, all too often, progress through school without their academic needs being met. Time and again, these students are not given the advantage of testing for advanced core classes. Employing this goal in my professional practice would afford students from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to apply to prestigious colleges and universities in the future and advocate for others by informing the world that differences are not deficits.

Moreover, in my professional practice, I am committed to the families of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Oftentimes, the families of students of color do not understand the decisions that are being made concerning their

children. Unfortunately, lack of education, socio-economic status, different language backgrounds, and the complexities of school policy hinder their comprehension or ability to understand school-based decision. An intended goal for the families of students of diverse backgrounds is to include these families in the decisions made concerning their children. For instance going over school policy concerning how placement decisions are made will flush out ambiguities. Asking the family to complete a standard of care survey on the school their child is attending could gauge the effectiveness of this measure. The school, as well as the school psychologist, will be informed on where they are in service delivery and families of color will be appropriately informed about their student's academic progress.

In closing, ethical and reflective educators who will be committed to the diverse needs of culturally and linguistically students are urgently need in the 21st century. As a future school psychologist, I am committed to the needs and growth of students of color, as well as providing a higher standard of care for these students and their families. I strongly believe that school psychologist are in a unique position to affect the education climate of American school systems by rendering a higher quality of care and accountability while addressing the diverse needs of students of color.

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*WEA Special Education Task Force Update
JANUARY 13, 2002*

WEA Representative Assembly

May 9, 2001, Adopted

2001 New Business Item No. 18

Title: Special Education and Educational Staff Associates (ESA) Task Force

Source: Cheryl Garvey, School Psychologist, Kennewick Education Association

Background: There are special education and ESA certificated teacher shortages. Today, the needs of students served by special education and ESA are greater and more complex with frequently changing program law.

Recommendations: That WEA form a task force for members working in Special Education and ESA to deal with certificated shortages, legislation, financial shortfalls, student/family/advocate difficulties, program needs, isolation due to the transient nature of the job, and professional development.

Members: Pat Steinburg, Dan Brown, Cheryl Garvey, Gail Hasbrouck, Linda Ball, Jan Galvin, Sue Render, Jan Bjorklund, Julie Moore, Tim Warren, Barb Thumblert, Cathy Houston

Summary of Activities: WSASP board members, Cheryl Garvey and Gail Hasbrouck, attended the first three meetings, which were held on November 7-8, December 14-15, and January 10-11. The next meeting is scheduled for February 1st and 2nd.

Purpose/Action Plan: To present information for the WEA Board and WEA Representative Assembly in April of 2001. The task force will seek a continuation of this project in 2002-2003 to secure support for the following agenda:

Information for the WEA Board:

1. How competitive with other states
2. Salary
3. Retirement benefits
4. Caseload/class size
5. Extent of shortage
6. Graduation rate

Potential Legislation:

1. Create equitable retirement for part time ESA personnel in the retirement system.
2. Provide provisional certification for school psychologists who are completing their internship year so that these individuals can get compensation based on the state teachers salary scale, with full benefits, beginning with the year of the internship.
3. ESA personnel who have experience working in their field outside of the public school system will receive credit for each of the years worked in their current professional capacity, or any other capacity, which requires certification in the state of Washington.
4. ESA personnel will be treated as other certificated personnel in the legislation which enables teachers to achieve their principal's credentials.
5. ESA personnel who hold national certification in their specialty area will receive a stipend equivalent to the stipend provided for National Board Certificated teachers.
6. Districts which hire special education teachers at a ration of 20/1 for qualified special education students will receive an extra \$100 per special education qualified student which may be used for program enhancements including assistive technology, materials, training for educators and parents.

7. Districts which hire ESA personnel at the following ratios will receive an extra \$100 per special education qualified student, which may be used for program enhancements including assistive technology, materials, and training for educators and parents.

Other tasks:

Statewide ESA survey on issues surrounding recruitment and retention (Completed before April, 2001). This survey will be mailed to the homes of member ESAs at the beginning of February. If you do not receive a survey call (253) 765-7061 and (800) 622-3393.

Develop a tutorial for WEA website on special education funding.

Create bargaining language for different ESA groups to be viewed on the WEA website. Supportive contract language is an incentive for recruiting ESAs.

Prepare a report (modeled after the Oregon R&R Project) for WEA website that makes recommendations to districts on the following: Local, state, and federal solutions for recruitment and retention of special education teachers and ESAs.

Your input is welcome. Gail Hasbrouck ghasbrouck@nwinfo.net

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Doug Gill Appointed to Commission on Excellence in Special Education

Home page for President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education:
<http://www.ed.gov/inits/commissionsboards/whspecialeducation/index.html>

On October 3, 2001, President Bush announced the creation of the Commission on Excellence in Special Education. Twenty individuals from throughout the country have been selected to serve on the Commission, including Doug Gill, Washington State Special Education Director. Terry Edward Branstad of Iowa who will serve as Chairman. Other members include Adela Acosta of Maryland, Steve Bartlett of Texas, Paul C. Butterfield of Pennsylvania, Jay G. Chambers of California, W. Alan Coulter of Louisiana, Thomas Albert Flemming of Michigan, Jack M. Fletcher of Texas, David W. Gordon of California, Nancy S. Grasmick of Maryland, Bryan C. Hassel of North Carolina, Douglas Carl Hunt of Ohio, Michael J. Rivas of Texas, Cheryl Rei Takemoto of Virginia, and Katie Wright of Illinois. The following Members of the President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education will serve ex officio: Elizabeth Ann Bryan of Texas, Edward Sontag of Virginia, Robert Pasternack of New Mexico, Reid Lyon of Maryland, Wade F. Horn of Maryland.

Executive Order: President's Commission on Excellence in Special Education. Sec.

3. Duties and Commission Report. The Commission shall collect information and study issues related to Federal, State, and local special education programs with the goal of recommending policies for improving the educational performance of students with disabilities. In furtherance of its duties, the Commission shall invite experts and members of the public to provide information and guidance. Not later than April 30, 2002, the Commission shall prepare and submit a report to the President outlining its findings and recommendations.

According to Doug, the first task force meeting is scheduled for January, 2002. The group is looking at the Fordham Foundation papers and Doug thinks that the assumptions of these papers may drive the development of any new policies. He encourages school psychologists to spread the word that we need to closely examine the underlying assumptions of the Fordham Foundation Papers: www.edexcellence.com. Doug encourages all who are interested to contact him directly to provide input dgill@ospi.wed.net.edu.

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WSPA Announcement

The psychologists of Washington need your help. As a free public service, we are conducting MTV/APA produced violence prevention for middle and high school students. Using a 23-minute videotape as the platform, psychologists launch a very interactive discussion with the students of the school. The tape and presentation are quite compelling and give explicit permission to speak out and prevent both assault and suicide among the students' peers. We have reached 45000 students. Many more thousands would benefit. Please help us gain access to the schools in Washington to make these presentations. Contact Andy Benjamin, J.D., Ph.D. (gahb54@u.washington.edu).

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A note from the Treasurer

Summer Institute Income: \$12,665.00

Summer Institute Expenditures: \$9,799.66

Net: \$2,865.34

Because the conference was co-sponsored by WSASP and Seattle University, the profits were split between the two institutions. Each institution received \$1,432.67.

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Washington State Get-Together at the NASP Conference in Chicago!

When? 8:30 p.m., February 27 (immediately proceeding the Minority Scholarship Reception)

Where? Meet in the main lobby of the Hyatt Regency. There are several outstanding casual restaurants within walking distance of the hotel.

Who? Washington State School Psychologists

NASP's 34th Annual Convention in Chicago! February 26-March 2, 2002. Register online at www.nasponline.org/convention.

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ISPA Conference - Nyborg, Denmark July 25th - 29th, 2002

An Event to Meet Colleagues and Friends from All Continents

Written by Gwen A. Lewis, Ph.D. WA State Rep. to ISPA

The 25th Annual International School Psychology Colloquium will convene in Nyborg, Denmark, at a conference hotel, NYBORG STRAND. The theme of the 25th annual is *Education for All - How Inclusive Can You Get?* School psychologists representing approximately 50 countries typically attend the international colloquia. The event provides opportunities for scientific enrichment as well as social encounters with school psychologists from around the world. The professional and social exchanges occur during coffee breaks, evening meals, excursions, concerts, the welcome reception and closing party as well as during the scientific presentations. I have attended six international colloquia and have found each colloquia to be challenging professionally while surrounded by the hospitality and charm of a different culture. While there are benefits of membership in ISPA, you do not need to be a member of ISPA to attend the conference. The conference brochure provides information should you wish to present a paper, a workshop, a symposium, a panel discussion, or a poster session. English is the official language of the colloquium. A request for a conference circular can be obtained by writing or sending an e-mail request.

Address: ISPA Central Office,
Hans Knudsens Plads
1 A, 1st floor
DK 2100 Copenhagen, Denmark.

E-mail: ispa-denmark@mobilixnet.dk. FAX: +45 39 29 47 00.

Please feel free to call me should you have questions about ISPA or about the colloquium. Gwen A. Lewis, Ph.D. WA State Rep. to ISPA My telephone number is: 425-670-7210, Edmonds School District.

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My Liepaja, Lativa Venture

Written by Ann Knofel , School Psychologist
Riverview School District , Carnation, Washington

In April 2001, I had the opportunity to work in Liepaja, Latvia, with special education teachers and their students and families. Bellevue, Washington, where I live, and Liepaja, Latvia, are sister cities through the Sister Cities International Program. Liepaja, a city of 90,000 people, is located on the Baltic Sea about fifty kilometers north of the Lithuanian border.

Our civic group has an on-going relationship with the Liepaja Special School, which we support through materials and curriculum for children and informational books for teachers. In 1998, the vice-principal of the school came to Bellevue for a month long visitation program to see special education classes, developmental centers, and medical facilities in the greater Seattle area. My trip to Liepaja was part of this educational exchange across the world.

My school district, Riverview, was also very supportive of me taking time for this trip and preparing the materials needed as an extension of my school psychologist position. Children from the elementary school I serve collected much needed school supplies for me to take to Liepaja. Special Education publishers gave me many excellent resources as donations to the Liepaja Special School.

What a remarkable trip to Liepaja! During the fifty years of Soviet occupation from World War II to 1991, when freedom was realized, Liepaja was a closed city because of the Soviet military presence there. People could not freely leave their city nor walk on the beautiful Baltic beaches. During the occupation years, children (and adults) with moderate/severe disabilities were hidden away. When Lativa became a free nation, it chose to educate all children. In 1992, the moderate/severe program began at the Liepaja Special School. The classes are called "Ceribu" classes, which translates as "Hope."

The Liepaja Special School educates 280 children and has three buildings: a school for moderate/severe children housed in a Soviet style building from the 1960's, a building from the 1800's where children with lesser disabilities attended school, and a boarding house where 80 students lived during the week so they could attend school. The Soviet era building was bleak and poorly constructed. The one from the 1800's still heated the classrooms by fireplaces! Twelve students were in each room in the boarding house, and it was rather grim. (Overall, 13,000 students are in the Liepaja School District.)

Children enter the Moderate/severe School at age seven, when a doctor sends them there. But they come without evaluations or medical diagnoses. Teachers will look through books to find out what they think the disability may be and guess at the child's functioning level and potential. Children with lesser disabilities come to the school through a committee decision after failure in a typical school in first or second grade. The concept of early childhood Special Education was nonexistent, except for a preschool/kindergarten class in a Christian School.

But the teachers were dedicated and so willing to learn. They kept classrooms clean and cheery and did their best with so little. Their knowledge base about disabilities and teaching methods is very weak, just because accessing information is so difficult and expensive. Life in the former Soviet Union, and especially Liepaja as a closed city, is very difficult. But there is hope as educators are trying to upgrade their knowledge and skills. Just this June, through a Soros Foundation grant, the school was able to hold its first camp for their students and parents. This was a huge first for these families.

I saw many children with Alcohol Related Birth Defects because beer is a cheap food in a poor country (and the water is not safe to drink), and people simply do not know the effect on unborn babies. There were also many children with cerebral palsy due to poor birth conditions. Children frequently had seizures in classes due to no money for medication. There was the typical range of other moderate/severe disabilities, although children with very severe disabilities may die at birth or be in an orphanage for children with disabilities. Educators had no concept of learning disabilities in children with normal intelligence. Just not hiding children with disabilities, as was done during Soviet years, is a major step and inclusion in the community and jobs is a leap in their thinking.

Besides working with the teachers at the Liepaja Special School, I spoke to groups of teachers from various schools and institutions in formal and informal settings, and visited many educational settings. They do have the foundation for educating all children, but not the content for being more specific to the needs of children with disabilities. I also met with parents; a heartwarming experience. I visited medical settings, which were dreadful. One activity I greatly enjoyed was lecturing at the Pedagogical Institute (teacher's college) to students learning about special education and disabilities. They were great students and did not have the fear we saw in older people. They were focused on the future and how to help their country emerge from years of oppression.

I met a young social worker and a school psychologist who worked at one of the general education schools. The social worker worked mainly with social service agencies to help families in need. The school psychologist worked as a school counselor directly with students. She had no knowledge of special education,

disabilities, standardized testing, or evaluations. The Pedagogical Institute is just beginning to educate students for these roles.

There are no Special Education laws in Latvia, a definite drawback. In fact, many common terms in the United States around disability issues are unknown. For example, there is no word for "access," and it was hard to translate that concept. However, education and other opportunities for persons with disabilities are likely to increase. Latvia, like many countries formerly part of the Soviet Union, wants membership in the European Union. The European Union guidelines include inclusion of all people in society and human rights agreements.

The City of Liepaja provided translators for our activities (my husband worked with adults with disabilities), and they treated us like celebrities. People were warm and friendly and happy to receive American assistance. I look forward to continuing my relationship with the Liepaja Special School. Our group is now planning the next step, which will be to bring a Latvian Special Education teacher to the Seattle area in the fall of 2002. We would like this teacher to work in one or two moderate/severe classes with master teachers for four to six weeks and get a good overview of planning and teacher the children. I would also like to put together a functional assessment tool, based on developmental milestones across functioning areas, adaptive skills, and observational data, in order to determine a child's level and areas for teaching. Ways to have goals and collect reasonable data for each child and track progress are also needed. This profile could be used throughout their school years.

We live in a global world and it is important to learn together how we are all alike in our educational needs, but just at different stages.

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DRAFT PAPER NOT FOR DISSEMINATION

Members are invited to complete the attached input form and email to Jane Eberle at jeberle@prodigy.net

Draft Position Paper on Equity Issues in the State Assessment System

Background:

In 1993, the state legislature adopted the four goals of the Basic Education Act. The state was responding to concerns from a variety of stakeholders in initiating this broad educational reform effort. The four components of the system were:

1. Identify what students should be able to know and do.

2. Devise a system for assessment
3. Align resources to fulfill these, and;
4. Hold districts accountable for attaining the standards.

The Commission on Student Learning (CSL) adopted the Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EALRS), following extensive involvement of teachers, parents and community participants. The Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL) has been developed to meet the need for an assessment. While the process needed for the State Board of Education to declare it valid and reliable has not been complete, it appears that at least several sections of it would already meet such scrutiny.

This effort is termed a "high standards, high stakes" reform effort, since not only are high standards set for what students are expected to know and do; but, students must pass the WASL in order to earn a Certificate of Mastery, a requirement for a high school diploma by 2008 (the ninth grade class of 2004).

The state is now well into the process of defining the accountability system. In 1997, the CSL accountability task force was developed and in 1998 this task force sent recommendations to the legislature, which adopted the fourth grade reading improvement goal. In 1999 the legislature added goals and established the Academic Accountability Commission, or A+ Commission (Substitute Senate Bill 5418). This group includes educators, business interests, parents, and community groups. They have established seven components to an accountability system for the state:

1. Improvement Goals and Plans
2. General Assistance
3. Annual Performance Analysis
4. Recognition Awards
5. Focused Assistance Based on a Performance Agreement
6. Performance Analysis
7. Intensive Intervention

However, this accountability system has only recently been enacted and has not yet had an opportunity to make improvements through assistance, recognition, or intervention.

Assumptions:

The assumptions of the current system appear to be:

1. Higher educational standards lead to higher achievement.
2. High standards can be measured by valid and reliable means.
3. Higher standards have a benefit for everyone. A corollary assumption was that participation in the high standards assessments was a key to participation in reform and the benefit to be attained from it.

Constitutional Issues:

The United States Supreme Court has interpreted a high school diploma to be either a "property right" or, more recently, an "entitlement". Therefore, certain tests must be met if there is a risk an individual will be denied a diploma. The Fourteenth Amendment protections of Due Process apply. Procedural due process (prior notice), which is at least two years notice, and substantive due process, which is a somewhat trickier concept having to do, in this case, with whether the required skills were available. In educational and psychological terms, this amounts to curriculum validity and instructional validity issues. In other words, were the required skills, to pass the test, offered in the curriculum, and, were they adequately taught and for a sufficient length of time? Other requirements ("reasonable accommodations"; and IDEA) will not be dealt with in this paper, since they appear to have been adequately addressed by the alternate assessment and the existing testing accommodations offered by the state.

Aside from the obvious issues posed by substantive due process, there is a subtler problem posed in this area. It is: Have the skills to be proficient on the WASL, even if present in the curriculum and taught, offered for long enough or in appropriate intervention programs, for those who had significant initial difficulties with them?

There is a challenge posed by the state effort at reform and the legal obligation toward under performing students. Can the educational reform effort encompass both high standards and equity?

System Accountability First:

The basis for considering equity in education rests upon both the vulnerability of children as well as their total dependence upon the system. This basic set of circumstances frames the most elemental moral demands on educators. It appears to have obvious implications for high stakes assessment assessments:

System accountability must precede and be a necessary prerequisite for individual accountability. Let the accountability system make changes in curriculum and instruction for a sufficient length of time to insure a true opportunity to learn. This should include, but not be limited to, an effort to close the achievement gap between white students and students of color, for instance.

Methods of Participation:

There are, at this time, various means of participation in the state assessment system: The Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), with or without accommodations; and the Washington Alternate Assessment System. The latter is intended for approximately 1-2% of the population, determined by IEP teams, according to criteria.

We have, therefore, three ways to participate. Either directly in the state assessments without accommodations, or with accommodations, or in the alternate assessment.

The Problem:

The allowance of two years (from 10th grade to 12th) for retake of failed areas of the WASL, as well as, the possibility of School To Work programs, may help some of these students. But the very real possibility of denial of a diploma looms over large segment of the school population, at this time.

The Challenge:

The difficulty presented by any attempt to do something for these student is to avoid operating outside of the assumptions of the current system, which have a broad basis of support and are the product of years of effort by many stake holders. It would be very unwise to make any attempt to operate outside of this system. Some efforts could prematurely curtail the benefits of reform to these students, if their participation were ended and they were no longer a part of the effort to change classroom instruction within general

Possible actions:

There would appear to be several general possibilities for action. Some of these would be structural (altering either the timelines or the Certificate of Mastery. Some would be procedural (altering the testing system).

Changes In Assessment:

The state has not allowed test modification, since this is a threat to validity. For example, one modification might be reading the reading test to a student (the

most obvious threat to validity) who has participated already and performed poorly, and whom professionals believe will need another means of demonstrating proficiency.

Another approach might be out-of level testing. This would work better with the Iowa tests than the WASL. The test manufacturers have procedures for out-of-level assessment.

Another option would be State Board approved local testing to demonstrate competence. Staff who have been certified by the state as competent scorers in a given area (e.g. Writing) could receive student work, which demonstrated competence and could certify it demonstrates competence for students who wish to challenge a WASL score in an area they failed. This would preserve the standard, but add another source of data.

Finally, there could be some other method of assessment, which does not stem from the WASL or other state level assessments. However, this would appear to pose a potential challenge to the assumptions of the current system. Participation in the state assessments is a key to participation in educational reform and, as such, should be supported. The advantage of the out-of-level testing and test modification approaches is they constitute participation, just of a different type. Therefore, they support, and do not detract, from the assumptions of the system.

Changes In Diploma or Certificate of Mastery:

Another approach would be either changes in graduation awards or a de-linking of the C.O.M. and the diploma. (In other words, not requiring the C.O.M. for a diploma, but requiring the testing and the reforms). Either of these would take State Board of Education and legislative action.

Modified Diploma:

Diplomas could be modified to show areas where competency standards were met, allowing some students to demonstrate achievement and earn a diploma.

Adjusted Criterion Score:

The current criterion (400) on the WASL could be adjusted for students who chronically under-perform over repeated administrations of state tests. This could be a combination of credits earned and achievement on other tests (e.g. ITBS/ ITED) or a statewide effort to gather data and issue a modified passing score for such students.

However, there is an assumption inherent in any attempt to do the above: That some effective instructional intervention has been attempted to remediate the deficit area(s). Therefore, it would be most effective if performance on state level assessments was combined with program intervention data, from research based instructional programs, and individual progress monitoring data.

Trend Data: Students of color and special education students

The WASL fourth grade trend data appears to suggest an upward trend in Reading and Writing over the past three years for all students of color. In Math, however, an upward trend appears to exist only for Asian and Native American students over the past three years; while the effect for Black and Hispanic students is too weak to suggest clear improvement. Fourth grade Listening scores are too inconsistent to establish any trend.

Seventh grade data suggests a consistent upward trend for all students of color in Writing. Reading and Math, however, appear to be weak. Listening at seventh grade is too inconsistent to establish a trend.

WASL tenth grade data over the past three years appears to indicate a strong upward trend for all students of color in Reading and Listening. Tenth grade Writing results appear too inconsistent across the three-year period for any trend. Tenth grade Mathematics results appear mixed, with strong improvements over three years by Asian and Native American students, but no clear trend of any strength for Black or Hispanic students.

At fourth grade, there has been a consistent trend of improving scores for special education students in Reading, Math, and Writing over the past three years of WASL administration. There has been no clear trend at seventh grade and only Listening has posted any clear improvements across the three years at tenth grade.

Application To Alternate Assessment:

Rationale: The current state assessment system has provided trend data for three years regarding the performance of special education students on the WASL. There appears to be some improvement in scores in several areas on the fourth grade assessments, however, this appears uncertain in any areas at seventh and tenth grades.

Principles:

1. Measures should be criterion referenced, since the WASL is a criterion referenced assessment.

2. The desired measures should be substantially linked with the Essential Learnings, since this is the statement of what students should know and be expected to be able to do.
3. Basic sound psychometric properties should be possessed by the chosen instruments, in accordance with professionally accepted standards.
4. Participation in the state assessment system is the goal. In order to fully preserve this goal, the measures used for the commercially available option of the Alternate Assessment should be given in addition to the WASL. The rationale for this is that this group of students is capable of responding to the test, unlike students taking the portfolio option. These students are basically taking an alternative measure, since there is reason to question the validity of the WASL for them. It is an appropriate practice, in such cases, to request more, not less information. These students should have other measures, such as commercially available measures, if IEP teams decide that their WASL results, in each individual case, may not be a valid measure. Also, these students would have academic goals on their IEP's, unlike students taking the portfolio option, who typically would be more likely to have life skills or goals extrapolated downwards from academic goals.

Out-Of Level Assessment:

Ease of administration, staff level of training to give the assessment, and the skills covered or sampled by the assessment, are issues critical to accuracy and validity of any assessment system. Failure to sample appropriately the skills required of students can lead to either construct under representation, where the assessment system does not adequately sample the desired skills, or construct irrelevance, in which too many extraneous skills are assessed. The ITBS and ITED have the advantage of being assessments already given in Washington State schools, with which staff is familiar, and their relationship to the state assessment system is known.

The Washington Assessment Student Learning (WASL) is based on sampling the skills outlined in the Essential Academic Learning Requirements and any alternate system, such as the WAA, should strive to adhere to the same skill base. The WAA Portfolio assessment retains this same character by asking teachers to relate goals and objectives on which data is reported, to the Essential Academic Learning Requirements.

Riverside Publishing has performed an extensive study of the ITBS and ITED and the degree to which they sample the skills outlined by the Essential Academic Learning Requirements. This study demonstrates a close alignment of these assessments with the state Essential Academic Learning Requirements and

Benchmarks. The degree of alignment is reported as very substantial in all areas. While there are some specific areas where coverage is less, these are an exception. Riverside Publishing and the State of Washington have already approved these results as an acceptable degree of sampling of the state requirements in joint publications.

The publishers of the ITBS/ITED authorize out-of-level assessments and publish norms for it. Therefore, application of this process to the state alternate assessment system would not entail a procedure, which would violate either the bounds of norming of the test, or the approved scoring procedures of the publisher. There are specific procedures to follow for out-of-level scoring, which are described both in standard manuals and special publications distributed by Riverside Publishing.

The best practices, authorized by the publishers, suggest use of an alternate on the ITBS/ITED which is up to two years below the student's grade placement. This probably means that out-of-level assessment on the ITBS/ITED would be better as an accommodation at 5th grade and above, and as an alternate assessment at 4th grade and below. This rationale would reflect the more substantial portion of a student's knowledge from 4th grade and below, represented by an assessment two years below the grade placement (50% +); whereas, at upper grades two years would reflect much less (16% - 40%).

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Please submit comments and suggestions to Jane Eberle at jeberle@prodigy.net

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Area 6 Meeting Update and "How We Have Gotten our Great Turn-outs"

Last spring Jodi Sheppard asked the special education directors for their support of release time for school psychologists during work hours in order that they to attend area meetings four times a year. They indicated that they were in complete support of this idea and many have enthusiastically encouraged their psychologists to attend the Area 6 meetings. Consequently, our Area Meeting attendance went up from the "Faithful 10" to 30 psychologists at the first meeting last April! That meeting was rather informal and we talked about recruitment/retention issues, current news from the WSASP Board, and the format for future meetings. We all appreciated the time together!

Scope has published a report of our second meeting early in the fall, where again we had close to 30 psychologists in attendance out of approximately 54 total in our area. The agenda was again informal: psychologists shared caseload information and talked about interpretation of various WACs. It was a good time to revisit the basics.

For our third meeting in December we invited Kathy Bartlett from OSPI kbartlett@ospi.wednet.edu, and Leslie Weaver, OSPI Program Supervisor lweaver@ospi.wednet.edu. Kathy, who has been the assistant director of OSPI, is now the new Director of Curriculum and Instruction in Special Education. She gave us an enthusiastic presentation of her new role and future plans, stating that the SPED team is working collaboratively with the other branches of OSPI in an unprecedented manner under Terry Bergeson's mandate. Kathy asked us to fill out a survey of our accomplishments and programs, as well as assistance needed from OSPI. We talked about some of these areas as well. Kathy's new team is focusing on curriculum and performance as opposed to compliance, such that monitors will focus on both program development for children as well as compliance. Kathy directed us to the site www.K12.WA.US/SpecialEd for info about the SPED team. Info can also be obtained through www.WSASP.Net, accessing the OSPI link. Following Kathy's talk, Leslie Weaver, Special Education liaison from our ESD, spoke with us about the WAC Special Education Regulations and offered insight on where to go when we have questions about law interpretation. She directed us to the informative sites www.sao.wa.gov/localgovernment/spedaudt.htm and www.sao.wa.gov/local.

We have continued to gather between 25-30 school psychologists at each of our meetings. It is a wonderful time to share, reflect, and learn from each other. It is a rejuvenating time for us all--no one should do this job alone! Our plan is to continue this format every year! After all, we are providing professional development as well as clock hours for our members; why is it that Area School Psychology meetings have always been held after hours?!

Susan Colwell and Jodi Sheppard, Area 6 co-reps
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AIMSweb Benchmark and Progress Monitor

AIMSweb Benchmark

You can now license this web based program at no cost for the remainder of this school year (normally \$4.00 per student) by subscribing now for the 2002-2003 school year (no payment until after July 1, 2002). AIMSweb **Benchmark** comes with 3 standard graded and equivalent reading passages Grades 1-7 (grade 8 available in spring). Training materials are also provided at no cost. The software will also manage and report on early literacy measures.

Progress Monitor

This web based program assists special education and Title 1 staff to write, measure and monitor reading and early literacy individual goals. Through May 17th you can license AIMSweb **Progress Monitor** for an introductory trade show price of \$99.00 per user for one calendar year (regularly \$239.00). This web based software comes with 30 standard graded and equivalent reading passages Grades 1-7 (Grade 8 available in Spring) and training materials. Early Literacy measures can also be charted.

AIMSweb Benchmark/Progress Monitor You can license both programs from now until the end of the year for \$1.50 per student (normally \$7.00 per student) by subscribing now for the 2002-2003 school year.

Strategic School Partner We currently have SSPs located throughout the country. But, we are still seeking additional partners. SSPs receive a 40% discount in exchange for acting as a demonstration site. Contact me (Gary Germann) at gary.germann@edformation.com to become a SSP. For ordering information go to www.edformation.com (Subscribe)

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Upcoming Events

WSASP Board Meeting, February 23, 2002, Yakima School District

Deadline for April Scope Online Newsletter

March 25, 2002

[Scope Online Newsletter](#)

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