Welcome to WASDA’s April edition of our online Newsletter!

We were very sorry we had to cancel all of our spring events due to the current COVID-19 Pandemic. Please know that while we are currently working from our homes, we are still here to serve you to the very best of our ability. It is our sincere hope that things will return to “normal” well before our summer Legal Seminar in Sturgeon Bay, which is scheduled for July 29-31. Please stay safe and healthy as you continue to do your best serving the children of Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators
4797 Hayes Road
Madison, WI 53704
608/242-1090
608/242-1290 - FAX
www.wasda.org
APRIL 2020

WASDA E-NEWS

WASDA President’s Message
WASDA Executive Director’s Report

The Capitol Report - John Forester, Dir. Of Gov. Relations

Election of WASDA Board Members
New Superintendents

2020 WASDA Summer Legal Seminar

2020 New School Board Member Gatherings

April BVL Update

Superintendent Vacancies

WASDA Calendar of Events

www.wasda.org
Hello WASDA Members!

You have heard this line hundreds of times in the last few weeks, "We are in unprecedented times." This is so true. However, I think it merits acknowledgement that so much of the work we engage in as superintendents each year is unprecedented. Think back on your career in education and all the situations which were a first for you. Dealing with the suicide of a student or death of a teacher, responding to a threat of violence in your school district, a bus accident, an outbreak of hand, foot, and mouth disease on the football team, ACT 10… the list is endless. While the magnitude of COVID-19 far surpasses the impact of individual situations in each of our school districts, we have the courage, the compassion, and the connections to work through this adversity with our students and staff. I have no doubt that in the end, when we are on the other side of this pandemic, our school districts will be stronger and the work of teachers and education will be valued more greatly by everyone in our communities.

Courage, compassion, and connections are each part of the solution to our work in responding to COVID-19. You have the courage to lead— that is why you accepted the role of a superintendent. Courage doesn't mean that you can't feel afraid or be worried, but it is demonstrated by your ability to rise above the fear and be strong in the face of adversity. As the face of your school district, you must also show that you use compassion in response to the concerns of others and in your decision-making. Being empathetic and understanding is extremely important in times when others feel uncertain and anxious. Decisions on paying employees who are not working, helping teachers find a balance of work time and caring for their families when doing their jobs from home, and providing support for balancing the social-emotional needs of our students with academic content and grades during this time requires the very important ability to demonstrate compassion. Lastly, our connections with one another, with WASDA, and with other leaders in our community will provide the support we need to stay strong and face each day. Don't hesitate to reach out to your colleagues for suggestions and ideas. Lean on one another for emotional care and comfort. While we are up to this challenge, we are still human. There will be moments of doubt, fleeting thoughts of not being capable of handling the problems which arise, and trepidation. That is when our relationships matter most!

We won't be seeing each other at WASDA Regional Meetings or at the WASDA Annual Spring Educational Conference. That doesn't mean that your WASDA colleagues aren't accessible to you. Pick up the phone and call a neighboring superintendent. Join a Zoom meeting with those in your CESA area. Jon Bales is still readily available to provide assistance and support. You are not alone! Keep using your courage, compassion, and connections to move forward in the weeks to come. We are in this together!

Cindy Zahrte
WASDA President, 2019-2020
cindyzahrte@tomah.education
YOUR GOALS.
OUR MISSION.

Wisconsin public school districts face unprecedented challenges and opportunities. The attorneys at Strang, Patteson, Renning, Lewis & Lacy, s.c., are dedicated to helping you meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities.

YOUR GOALS • OUR MISSION

Green Bay - Toll Free: (844) 833-0830  Madison - Toll Free: (844) 626-0901
Oshkosh - Toll Free: (833) 654-1180

strangpatteson.com
Good Day All,

I am writing my message this month, as technical difficulties preclude my using video. I hope this message finds you, your colleagues and your family and friends healthy and safe.

Over the past weeks, I have been able to connect with many of you via various on-line interactions, emails and calls. I anticipate this will continue over the next several weeks as we will be confronted with continuous challenges to operational decision making. Please do not hesitate to reach out through any of these means. I am committed to giving you the most current status of things, even if that is not yet the definitive answer to an issue. When we know definite facts, we will get those to you. For now, I will deal with a couple of issues that are most prominent.

Finance Related:

Federal: As with any law, the CARES ACT will go through a series of stages in which congress and legal authorities "translate" or interpret the language of the Act into rules for practical implementation. At this point, these are in development. As a result, we do not know the details of how the Federal dollars will flow to the states and what parameters might be placed on them. I anticipate these details will emerge over the next days and weeks, particularly those that will be shaped by DOE who had 30 days from the Act's enactment to respond. Know that AASA lobbyists, aligned with your WI lobbyist and myself, are actively advocating on behalf of superintendents along with many other educational associations and individual superintendents in WI and other states. State Executives in my role in other states and I have signed on to several advocacy memos on issues important to you. Our general approach has been to seek maximum dollars directly to districts with maximum flexibility.

State: Once the Feds decide how to allocate the resources to states, state Government and DPI officials will develop state level laws and/or rules on what and how resources will be disseminated to districts. At this point it is impossible to know what this will look like, so we will have to be patient and advocate in anticipation for the things we seek.

It is safe to assume that Wisconsin's state finances, like other states, will face a major impact on the state budget given drastic effects on revenues related to the health crisis. For us, that will include the budget anticipated for the second year of the biennium in 2020-2021. Again, we can't know what that impact will be, but it is reasonable to assume we will need to advocate for preserving dollars committed in this budget while at the same time planning for a possible decrease in the allocation and what that might mean for your local budget. Sadly, this is not unlike the challenge you face in the first year of any biennial budget. We are in constant communication with Legislators and will convey recommendations to you concerning budgeting as we get more information and insight.
Operational:
There are many operational issues you face, and these will continue. I encourage your continuing calls and emails on these as I cannot begin to address all the issues here. I'll touch on some of the bigger ones.

School Closure for the Rest of the Year:
We have been advocating heavily for the Governor's Office in conjunction with DHS to decide on this as soon as possible. We know this will benefit your planning. At the time of this writing, the Governor has not wanted to make this call. However, I am confident he is fully aware and weighing the implications and what it would mean to you. I will repeat what I have shared with many of you in recent communications - that I advise you to make plans to continue whatever educational efforts you are currently making for the remainder of the year. This was reinforced recently by the State Superintendent. There is simply no evidence in monitoring the ongoing health crisis that we will be able to reconvene students into the school building anytime between now and June. I say this based upon all conversations held with DHS, CDC and most recently with WH officials and my Executive Director colleagues.

2020 Seniors
You should be making plans now on determining graduation eligibility for seniors. The authority rests with your local board to determine whether students have satisfactorily met the requirements to be granted the state mandated 15 credits for graduation. The board may at any time suspend any policy it has requiring credits beyond the 15. You may consult memos from the DPI on this subject. I also suggest you discuss with your colleagues in your region what approach and guiding principles are being used to make this determination. In any method, documentation of the process you used to reach your decision will be important.

Areas in Which to Seek Counsel
There are many district specific nuances to operational issues you face. This is especially true in personnel matters and in other areas where there are contractual issues - either in-district or third party such as transportation. I advise you in these cases to work with your district's legal counsel to work through questions and ultimate decision-making. As stated above, several elements are included in the CARES Act and related DOL directives that may provide you some relief and mediation in these areas. However, the lack of clarity in the language coupled with your individual circumstances of contracts or handbooks warrant deferring to counsel for guidance in these and similar operational issues.

And finally, …
I wish I could give you all of the answers to your questions at this time. I can only say that I am certain they will come, just not at the pace you prefer. As we know, you will know. In the meantime, please do not hesitate to call me, email with your questions, or invite me into an on-line discussion. I will give you the best information I can at the time.

Please take care of yourself. You are a valuable asset to your district, your community and certainly your family. While you will not hear that as often as it is warranted, it is no less true. jb
ACHIEVING THE GRADE
CONTRACT NONRENEWAL

Navigating the complex world of teacher contracts requires an understanding of the nonrenewal statute, individual teacher contracts, board policy and workplace culture. With any nonrenewal, time is an important factor. Just as important is using legal counsel to ensure compliance with the statutory process and timelines, and positioning the district to minimize legal liability in any post-nonrenewal challenges.

Our School Law Team has the depth and experience to handle your most challenging nonrenewal matters at the critical stages of the nonrenewal process.

To learn more about how our School Law Team can assist you with contract nonrenewal challenges, please contact Chrissy Hamiel at chamiel@vonbriesen.com.
ELECTION OF WASDA BOARD MEMBERS

The following terms of board members currently serving on the WASDA Board of Directors expire as of June 30, 2020:

- CESA #1 John Thomsen - Whitefish Bay
- CESA #2-East Wayne Anderson - Williams Bay* (One-year term)
- CESA #5 Tim Raymond - Cambria-Friesland
- CESA #6 Annette Thompson - Dodgeland
- CESA #9 Larry Ouimette - Lac du Flambeau
- CESA #12 Craig Olson - Hayward

John Thomsen, Tim Raymond, Annette Thompson and Craig Olson are eligible for reelection for a three-year term on the board. The other board members are NOT eligible for reelection.

Wayne Anderson, the representative for CESA #2-East, will be retiring effective June 30, 2020. Therefore, a special election needs to occur to complete the remaining one year on his term. All of the other positions are for three-year terms on the board.

Members of the WASDA wishing to place their names on a ballot to run for the board position open in their respective CESAs must notify the WASDA office on or before April 15, 2020.

In order to have a name placed on the election ballot, voting members of the WASDA must follow one of the two following procedures:

1. A written letter of declaration (or email) by the voting member sent to the WASDA office. OR
2. By three voting members of the WASDA signing a nomination paper requesting the name of a WASDA member to be placed on the ballot.

In the event more than two candidates qualify for the ballot, there shall be a primary election held not less than 30 days before the general election, to be conducted in the same manner as the general election. Ballot order shall be determined by draw of names by the Executive Director of the association in the presence of two voting members who are not candidates for the office. The ballots shall be distributed to the voting members no later than May 15, 2020, with an established deadline for return of the completed ballot of June 1.

NEW SUPERINTENDENTS

If you are leaving your district, please be sure to notify the WASDA office of the name of the new person who will be assuming the superintendency. If the new person is either new to the superintendency or new to the state of Wisconsin, be sure to have them hold the dates of August 5-6 for the first New Superintendents Workshop for the 2020-21 school year, which will be held at the Holiday Inn-Stevens Point.
2020 WASDA SUMMER LEGAL SEMINAR

Mark your calendars now and plan to attend WASDA’s Annual Summer Legal Seminar at the beautiful Stone Harbor Resort in Sturgeon Bay. This year’s seminar will be held July 29-31.

WASDA members can call the Stone Harbor Resort now to reserve their room for the evenings of July 29 and 30. Please call the resort directly at 1-920-746-0700. Please do not wait long to book your room as the resort typically sells out for this event!

To assist in your planning, the seminar will kick-off with a reception at 5:30 p.m. on Wednesday, July 29, followed by dinner and the first presentation. The seminar will continue all day on Thursday and adjourn by noon on Friday, July 31. There will also be an informal golf outing at noon on Wednesday, July 29.

The program will be planned this spring. Registration information should be available online at www.wasda.org in May.
2020 NEW SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER GATHERINGS

LIVE WEBINARS • APRIL 21, 22 & 23, 2020

Updated Information: Due to the ongoing public health crisis, the WASB 2020 New School Board Member Gatherings will be held online.

There will be NO in-person gatherings.

The WASB New School Board Member Gathering webinars will provide an informal orientation for newly elected school board members to:

- Discuss essential information for their first board meeting.
- Learn about WASB services that can help them in their new role.

There will be three live webinars for new school board members to choose from:

- Tuesday, April 21, 7 pm
- Wednesday, April 22, 7 pm
- Thursday, April 23, 7 pm

Each webinar is scheduled to last for one hour and will be hosted by a WASB attorney. The content will be the same each night. Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions.

The webinars are open to all school board members and district administrators.

A recording will be made available after April 23.

The links to the live webinars will be added to the WASB website in April.

NO REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Visit WASB.org for more information.
BVL APRIL Update

We picked a few videos you might find helpful this month

Baird is dedicated to your district and your school finance needs. Although the BVL library is full of useful videos to be accessed anytime, this month in the business office, you might be interested in the below videos:

How Are Districts’ Maximum Revenue/Member Amounts Determined?
What is the May 15th Equalized Value Certification?
Summer School
Summer School Reporting

If you have any questions on the above videos, or if you have any comments on how the BVL can better serve your district, let us know! Reach out to any member of our team below; we’d be happy to help.

Dennis Birr
School Business Specialist
608-415-1254
dbirr@rwbaird.com

Debby Brunett
School Business Specialist
715-552-3567
dbrunett@rwbaird.com

Todd Hajewski
School Business Specialist
414-298-1974
thajewski@rwbaird.com

Steve Kopecky
School Business Specialist
262-719-2497
skopecky@rwbaird.com

Keith Lucius
School Business Specialist
920-634-6999
klucius@rwbaird.com

Elise Murn
Coordinator
414-298-2324
emurn@rwbaird.com

Diane Pertzborn
School Business Specialist
608-438-8125
dpertzborn@rwbaird.com