

DRAFT Program, as of Monday October 14, 2024

The program is subject to change



 **WERA** | Washington Educational
Research Association

2024 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Adapting to the Future:

Navigating Change &
Embracing Innovation in Education

December 4-6, 2024
Tacoma Marriott

Wednesday, December 4
Separate Pre-Registration Required

7:30-9:00

Check-in and Continental Breakfast

9:00-12:00

Pre-Conference Morning Sessions

1. Crafting Clarity: Mastering the Art of AI Prompt Engineering in Education

Presenters: Kris Hagel, Chief Information Officer, and James Cantonwine, Director of Research & Assessment, Peninsula School District

Explore the art of Prompt Engineering in our interactive workshop. Learn how to craft effective AI prompts that yield meaningful and actionable insights from educational data. This session will equip you with strategies to enhance AI responsiveness and accuracy in educational research. Access to a frontier model AI is encouraged but not required.

2. Student Identification Processes and the Impact on Education Equity

Presenter: Kenneth Olden, Director of Assessment and Data, Wapato School District

This session will cover pre-existing student identification models, the updates to OMB SPB 15 and their proposed changes to student race/ethnicity identification, OSPI's work on updating student race/ethnicity data collection and use in Washington State, and the impact this work has on local and state achievement metrics and access to equitable education funding and outcomes for under- and misidentified student populations.

3. Building Sustainable Systems for Culturally Responsive Mastery-based Learning

Presenters: Alissa Muller, Director of Policy, Randy Spaulding, Executive Director, and Seema Bahl, Associate Director of the Mastery-based Learning Collaborative, State Board of Education

Schools are embracing two complementary approaches—Mastery-Based Learning (MBL) and Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education (CRSE)—to create more engaging and relevant learning spaces and more equitably prepare students for a successful future. This session will include an overview of the strategies used in MBL and CRSE before diving into how the State Board is partnering with schools, districts, state level partners, and national experts to build a sustainable system for this work. Attendees will engage in discussion with state and local leaders and provide feedback to inform these efforts.

4. Building Inclusive Integrated Student Supports within an MTSS Framework

Presenters: RJ Monton, Director of MTSS, Dr. Cassie Martin Executive Director of Special Ed, Dr. Tania May, Assistant Superintendent of Special education, and Briana Kelly, Assistant Director of Restorative Practices and Student Discipline, OSPI

This session will explore the statewide focus of integrating systems and efforts to provide inclusive outcomes for all students. In addition to inclusionary supports, the session will examine several related and interwoven state efforts, reducing exclusion, supporting a sense of belonging as a preventative factor, and highlighting the systems that support this improvement effort. Participants will engage with models and concepts to promote this systems level improvement as well as a multitude of tools to use in their buildings and districts for implementation and improvement efforts.

5. 3Es of PLCs

Presenter: Nicole Sangastiano, Assessment & Analytics Account Executive, Renaissance Learning
Efficacy, equity and efficiency! This session will provide an actionable approach to strengthening professional learning communities by offering clear strategies to combat data silos to enhance best first instruction and differentiation. Participants will take away strategies that are implementable in the next 10 days, 10 weeks and 10 months. A strong focus on cycles of inquiry while using formative assessment data will help strengthen methodological and pedagogical toolboxes that will maximize student outcomes and help address the ever-present learning loss post covid more strategically.

6. R Language and Environment for Beginners

Presenter: David Denton, Professor, Seattle Pacific University

Curious to learn about R? R is a programming language and environment for statistical computing and graphics. This workshop is for anyone who is unfamiliar with R and wants to learn some basics to get started. Topics include a brief history of R, installation, working with the console, importing data, generating descriptive statistics and graphics. The workshop is step-by-step, with examples and practice throughout. Participants will need a laptop. Installing R prior to the workshop is helpful, but not required. Read more about R and computer requirements at <https://cran.r-project.org/>.

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-4:00

Pre-Conference Afternoon Sessions

7. AI Unpacked: Transforming Educational Data into Actionable Insights

Presenters: Kris Hagel, Chief Information Officer, and James Cantonwine, Director of Research & Assessment, Peninsula School District

This session provides an introduction to using AI to interpret complex data in a safe and secure environment. Participants will have the opportunity to analyze and visualize educational data through natural language processing with minimal past experience with data analysis. Commercial and free models will be used to demonstrate how aggregate data can be processed alongside an AI before moving to a new, closed environment within AWS & Azure that should calm privacy concerns about where student data is stored. By the end of this workshop, attendees will gain a deeper understanding of how AI can enhance their ability to interpret and utilize data more efficiently and ethically. Bring your questions and your data!

8. Data in Action: High School to Postsecondary Transitions

Presenters: Shannon Calderone, Associate Professor, WSU-Everett; Gretchen Pflueger, Heather Steele, and Brian Rick, Bellingham Public Schools; Susan Rose and Felicie Becker, Quincy School District; Demetricia Hodges and Tricia Eargle, Clover Park School District

Join us for an energizing session focused on how districts and schools can more effectively support students' postsecondary aspirations. We'll share insights from a Gates Foundation-funded study that uncovers how students perceive the support they receive for college access and career readiness, highlighting both effective strategies and critical areas needing improvement. This workshop offers a unique opportunity to reflect on your district's own practices, collaborate with peers, and develop actionable strategies to close gaps and enhance postsecondary outcomes. Leave inspired and equipped with practical tools to elevate your district's support systems.

9. Assessing & Using District Capacity for Implementing Innovation

Presenter: Caryn Ward, RTI

Does your district have capacity for implementing innovation? In this interactive workshop, participants will learn how to assess and use district capacity results in conjunction with other implementation and outcome data to guide their implementing planning. Participants will use case studies and illustrations for applied learning and leave with tools and access for administering, analyzing, and reporting capacity assessment results.

10. Embracing Innovation to Support MTSS Implementation in a Large Comprehensive High School

Presenters: Dr. Michelle Smith and Gregory Domingos, Assistant Principals, Pasco High School, Pasco School District

Utilization of MTSS systems can be overwhelming and without the right tools solutions can be driven by the wrong data. How using innovative technology to understand student behaviors, movements, & locations among 2,500 students and establish appropriate Tiered interventions is the focus of this workshop. The workshop will include an explanation of the use of Minga, a digital student management system and data from EduClimber and PowerSchool.

11. “What to do When you Wear all the Hats? Building and Sustaining Effective MTSS Structures in Small School Districts

Presenters: Donna Squires, Academic Achievement Specialist, Pioneer School District and Laura Smith, ELA Coordinator at ESD114

This interactive session will focus on the unique challenges and opportunities small school districts face when developing and maintaining Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS). Participants will engage in discussions, share experiences, and explore solutions to common issues. This is NOT a sit-and-get presentation; it is a facilitated problem-of-practice session. The goal is to empower and equip educators with practical strategies to enhance MTSS implementation in their districts. We encourage participants at all stages of development to join us in this learning experience.

12. Designing Professional Learning for the Future: Examining the Intersection of Collective Teacher Efficacy and High-Quality Professional Learning

Presenter: Stephanie Thomas, Assistant Director for Licensure, Accreditation & Assessment, Oregon State University-Cascades

Research shows high-quality professional learning possesses design structures likely to have a positive impact on efficacy beliefs among educators. Given the positive correlates to high levels of collective teacher efficacy, it is imperative to intentionally design professional learning with the specific intention of growing the collective efficacy of educators. In this session we will confirm the characteristics of high-quality professional learning, explore what research tells us about its intersection with collective teacher efficacy, and explore implications and tools for our practice.

13. How to Start with SQL for Education

Presenters: Cameron Marsden and Jeff Pannel, Senior Data Analysts, OSPI

Come join data analysts from OSPI to learn the basics of how to use structured query language (SQL) to access and analyze your database data. This workshop will walk through the basics of what a database and SQL are and enable you to able to apply basic aggregations to your data for quick answers. This workshop will have attendees working with their computers, so signing up early is advised to ensure your IT team has time to get you the software you need.

4:30-7:00 Happy Hour
Hosted by Renaissance Learning

Zeek’s Pizza (Upstairs)
1702 Pacific Ave,
Tacoma, WA 98402

Renaissance

See Every Student.

Thursday, December 5

7:00-8:30 Check-in and Continental Breakfast
(DAC Welcome – Location TBD)

8:30-10:30 Opening Session

Welcome from Shannon Calderone, WERA President

Remarks from Chris Reykdal, Washington State Superintendent

Keynote Address

Dr. Caryn S. Ward, “Creating Enabling Conditions for Innovation and Implementation

10:30-10:45 Transition time

10:45-12:00

Breakout Session #1

Keynote Follow-Up Session

Lead Presenter: Caryn Ward, RTI

Description: This session will give participants the opportunity to discuss ideas presented at the keynote presentation as well as raise questions and make comments.

Beyond The Shiny Objects: How Artificial Intelligence Can Reshape Our Service to Learners

Lead Presenter: Shelby Reynolds, Assistant Director, Instructional Technology and Library Services, Northshore School District

Description: In today's rapidly evolving educational landscape, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) holds immense potential to revolutionize teaching and learning experiences. This session aims to highlight the transformative impact of AI in our practice, providing insights into practical applications, benefits, challenges, and ethical considerations. Northshore will share its approach to the implementation of AI, including professional learning, guidance for staff and students, and community engagement.

Clearly Seeing the Present Can Shape the Future: The Value of Perceptual Data in Strategic Plan Development and Progress Monitoring.

Lead Presenter: Wade Smith, Superintendent, Walla Walla Public Schools

Co-Presenters: John Steach, CEO, and Erich Bolz, VP, Research & District Engagement, CEE

Description: All too often we focus on academic outcomes only in education. Rather than looking at only lagging indicators, the Walla Walla School District balances this with the inclusion of perceptual data in the development of its strategic plan and monitoring of progress on this work. See how an 8-year focus on leading indicators has made a significant difference in informing district and building level work along with student outcomes.

Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Inclusionary Support Team for Behavior: Improving and Sustaining Inclusion of All Students in a General Education Setting

Lead Presenter: Stephanie Thomas, Assistant Director for Licensure, Accreditation & Assessment, Oregon State University-Cascades

Co-Presenters: Bill Cheney, Director for Student Support and Prevention Systems, Mount Vernon School District

Description: High quality program evaluation serves systems by making impact evident and informing improvement. We will share the perspective of an outside evaluator and a district leader of our program evaluation process for the MVSD Inclusionary Support Team (IST). The IST partners with school sites providing tertiary behavior supports with the goal of maintaining inclusionary placements whenever possible. Design, methodology, and key findings will be detailed. Attendees will gain insight regarding the value of program evaluation and resources to conduct a program evaluation in their own setting.

Forming' PLCs with Formative Assessment

Lead Presenter: Nicole Sangastiano, Assessment & Analytics Account Executive , Renaissance Learning

Description: In depth guide and collaborative discussion in using formative assessments and item analyses to strategically, efficaciously and systematically to evaluate student achievement, identify misconceptions and plan remedial or accelerated response to student data.

Measuring Academic Growth on the WIDA Assessment using Student Growth Percentiles

Lead Presenter: Brian Gabele, Director of Assessment & Program Evaluation, Clover Park School District

Description: SGPs are used to measure growth on the Smarter Balanced Assessment as well as by major district assessments such as iReady, Star and MAP. However, for Washington State's annual multilingual learner assessment - the WIDA – SGPs are not provided. This presentation will explain how SGPs are used in other states to measure growth on the WIDA and demonstrate why they should be used to measure student growth over the simple methods being used by most districts in Washington.

Open Doors Youth Reengagement

Lead Presenter: Mandy Paradise, Associate Director of Reengagement, OSPI

Co-Presenters: Julie Petrokubi, PhD, Managing Researcher, Education Northwest

Description: Join us to hear the recent innovations in high school reengagement. Although OSPI's Open Doors Youth Reengagement Program is among the most innovative in the nation, the future requires us to adapt. The session will present insights from two collaborative inquiry projects conducted between 2021 and 2025 that brought together administrative data on student progress statewide with new data collection (e.g. survey, focus groups, photovoice) to provide concrete examples of promising practices related to climate, instruction, case management, and community partnership. Examples of how collaborative inquiry outcomes are used at the state level will also be shared.

Session Title: Skill Up for Our Future

Presenter: Brian Jeffries, Policy Director, Washington Roundtable

Description: Washington's economy has thrived over the last decade. Projected state job growth from 2023 to 2032 is at 12.8%, a rate that will eclipse the projected national average of 2.8%. During this period, Washington will see an estimated 1.5 million+ job openings, of which 75% will require postsecondary credentials. Bachelor's and advanced degrees will be in highest demand – necessary for 45% of job openings. However, Washington's education system is not adequately preparing local talent, and importing talent won't close the gap. This presentation will highlight new research and state-level data on expected job concentrations and credential needs, identify gaps, and explore approaches to support economic mobility and develop a robust workforce.

Through Their Lens: Community-Driven Definitions of Inclusive Spaces

Lead Presenter: Rachael Waldrop, Data Analyst, Kent School District

Co-Presenters: Simone Hamilton, Director of Equity & Strategic Engagement, Sara Dumlao, Assistant Director of Business Services, Fera Stjarna, Teacher, and Quinterria Middleton, School Psychologist, Kent School District

Description: Stakeholders across the Kent School District used a participatory action research framework to actualize a strategic initiative of promoting a diverse and inclusive workplace culture through investments in enriching, accessible and inclusive physical spaces. Across two phases, the team collected data using Photovoice, a process where participants capture and share aspects of their environment and experiences for the purpose of impacting change and disrupting power imbalances. The experience inspired engagement in new ways, as well as informed further research and action.

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-1:15 Transition time

1:15-2:30

Breakout Session #2

Career & Technical Education in Washington State: Collaborate with us to interpret findings from a longitudinal study of student access, participation, and outcomes

Lead Presenter: Sam Riggs, Principal Researcher, Education Northwest

Co-Presenters: Dani Fumia, Senior Research Scientist, ERDC

Liz Dehlbom, Senior Data Scientist, ERDC

Krista Fox, Director, Career and Technical Education, OSPI

Description: Education Northwest and the Washington State Education Research & Data Center are conducting a longitudinal study to explore student access, participation, and persistence in CTE programming, and the high school graduation, postsecondary, and labor market experiences of students achieving different CTE credit thresholds. In this interactive session, participants will actively engage in large and small group discussions to make meaning from preliminary findings, distill which findings are most relevant to and actionable for educators and policymakers in Washington, and shape the final report.

Critical Conversations to Operationalize Equity and Access in Gifted Education: Let's Talk

Lead Presenter: Jann Leppien, Professor Emerita, Graduate Studies in Gifted Education, Whitworth University

Co-Presenters: Nancy Hertzog, Professor and Director of Learning Sciences and Human Development, University of Washington

Description: How do we raise awareness of the needs of advanced learners in our districts as we move towards a more diverse recognition of students who are ready for accelerated and enhanced instruction? We invite participants to share their district initiatives as we explore promising practices to better ensure equitable service delivery models in the field of gifted education.

Data Viz SIG Gallery: Visualizing Changes.

Lead Presenter: David Ogden, Assessment Facilitator, Renton School District

Description: Districts or service providers from across Washington sign up to share their data visualizations that align with the symposium theme: "Adapting to the Future: Navigating Change and Embracing Innovation in Education." Volunteers will have 5-7 minutes to share their data visualizations with 3-5 minutes of questions and feedback.

Establishing a Data Culture in Education

Lead Presenter: Nick Bontrager, Director of State & Federal Programs, Data, Assessment, and Systems, Moses Lake School District/DataXS

Description: "My kids, my kids, my kids." Actually, they are our kids in an educational institution. This phrase may signal a lack of a data-driven culture. Discover strategies to foster a data culture by emphasizing data literacy, daily integration, and effective tools. Overcome challenges and learn from real-world case studies. Engage in discussions to gain insights and actionable steps to make data central to enhancing student outcomes and institutional effectiveness. Perfect for educators, administrators, and data professionals.

Reading to Belong: Equipping Educators with Tools to Facilitate Critical Conversations

Lead Presenter: Alyson Rumberger, Instructional Specialist, Issaquah School District

Co-Presenters: Emilie Hard, Pamela Washington

Description: Our nation's schools are rapidly diversifying, and simultaneously schools have become a site for culture wars. This session will explore how teachers and school leaders can use diverse children's literature to have conversations with students around identity, belonging, and empathy. This session is based on our book *Reading to Belong* (released April 2024), and bridges the gap between research and practice by sharing snapshots of conversations happening in real classrooms. Attendees will have opportunities to actively examine and collectively process sample transcripts from class discussions.

Re-Designing the Elementary Experience for Student Equity, Joy, and Academic Health

Lead Presenter: Kimberley Astle, Associate Director Elementary Science and Content Integration, OSPI

Co-Presenters: Jana Brock, Elementary Science Instructional and Integration Specialist, North Thurston Public Schools, Kelly Pease, Elementary Director of Teaching & Learning, and Jake Duke, K-12 Science and STEM Specialist, Lake Washington School District

Description: How can we innovate elementary systems to center on students through the lenses of equity, joy, and academic health? Come learn about OSPI's elementary framework, "Essential Practices for an Equitable and Academically Healthy Elementary Experience", and how we are partnering this tool with interdisciplinary learning in statewide work with teachers, coaches, and district leaders to

rethink/redesign systems and instructional approaches. You will also hear from two school districts and how they are using these ideas to revision the elementary experience for their students.

State Summative Science, Math, and ELA Scores and Reporting

Lead Presenter: Jacob Parikh, Science Assessment Specialist, OSPI

Co-Presenters: Korey Peterson, Science Assessment Specialist, OSPI. Maja Wilson, ELA Assessment Specialist, OSPI. John Mean, Math Assessment Specialist, OSPI

Description: This session will provide information on the purposes and design of state testing, an overview of state-level data, information on accessing local data, and a framework for asking questions using assessment data. Participants will reflect on teaching practices in their local contexts and on the needs and experiences of their students. Resources available to improve student access to and success with the state standards will be provided and discussed.

Student Race/Ethnicity Data at OSPI

Lead Presenter: Jennifer Appleyard, Director of Data Governance, OSPI

Co-Presenters: Darby Kaikkonen, Director of Student Information, OSPI

Michelle Matakas, Director of School Apportionment and Financial Services, OSPI

Heather Rees, Research & Policy Development Program Manager, CISL, OSPI

Kaori Strunk, Director of Educator Data, OSPI Maria Flores, Executive Director Center for the Improvement of Student Learning (CISL), OSPI

Description: OSPI staff from several teams will share highlights of possible changes to how race/ethnicity data are collected at the state level, and reporting examples. Attendees will have an opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions.

Studentstory.ai: Using AI to Eliminate Barriers to Accessing and Utilizing Student Voice Data

Lead Presenter: Susan Rose, Instructional Coach, Quincy School District

Description: Analyzing student voice data from qualitative sources like focus groups and transcripts can be an arduous task that gets in the way of listening to their needs and experiences. In this session, participants will learn about a new tool called studentstory.ai that uses the power of AI and sentiment analysis to produce thematic findings of qualitative data quickly and easily. This tool is designed by an educator for educators and aspires to lower the barrier to entry so that all practitioners can employ student voice regularly and reliably in their practice.

2:30-2:45 Snack break with transition time

2:45-4:00

Breakout Session #3

Adaptation Through Stakeholder Empowerment: Leveraging Program Evaluation to Navigate Changes in Key K-12 School District Functions while Prioritizing Equity

Lead Presenter: Elizabeth Barker, Assistant Director of Research & Evaluation, Kent School District

Co-Presenters: Rachael Waldrop, Data Analyst & Katherine Hinkelman, Data Analyst, Kent School District

Description: Kent School District's Research & Evaluation team shares insights from collaborating with local stakeholders in program evaluation design to address key functions of the district: curriculum and community partnerships. By engaging staff to shape research design and evaluation tools, the team challenged traditional research methods to reveal the capacities within districts to use their own wisdom to affect change. This session explores two case studies focusing on stakeholders as collaborators in research design and using a community advisory board approach to develop an evaluation rubric.

Blending Proactive & Responsive Supports with Ninth Grade Success

Lead Presenter: Kefi Andersen, Assistant Director of Early Warning Systems, OSPI

Co-Presenters: Henterson Carlisle, Northwest Regional Director, Center for High School Success. David Knight, Lead Researcher, Education Analytics Consulting.

Description: What structures support taking action on the data you collect? Creating ninth grade success teams encourages proactively designing student supports. Ninth graders who are on track at the end of their ninth-grade year are four times more likely to graduate than off track peers. You can use data visualizations, empathy interviews, team protocols, personalized coaching, and regional professional development to offer timely supports in partnership with community-based organizations, students, and their families. We want to share with you lessons learned and implications for schools statewide.

Civic Education in Washington: Policy and a Best Practice

Lead Presenter: Walter Parker, Professor of Civic Education Emeritus, University of Washington

Co-Presenters: Andrew Miller, Associate Director of Social Studies, Secondary Education and Pathway Preparation, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

Description: Superficial civic learning at school remains a challenge for districts and schools. The WA legislature responded in 2020 by requiring a stand-alone high school civics course for graduation but without the needed professional development for teachers in both knowledge and practice. This session details the current state policy and implementation landscape, and presents a research-based solution that has proven successful across the US for the high school civics course.

Colleague.AI: A Specialized AI Assistant for K-12 Educators—Transforming Customized Content Creation and Teaching

Lead Presenter: Min Sun, Professor, Director of AmplifyLearn.AI, UW, College of Education

Co-Presenters: Alex Liu, Graduate Research Assistant and Shawon Sarkar, Senior Data Scientist at AmplifyLearn.AI, College of Education, UW.

Description: Explore the transformative power of AI in K-12 education with our session on Colleague.AI—a cutting-edge tool designed to enhance teaching effectiveness and administrative efficiency. Discover how Colleague.AI customizes educational content and assessments to meet diverse student needs, supports ongoing teacher professional development, and streamlines administrative

tasks. This session will demonstrate practical applications of AI that can elevate educational practices, making teaching more impactful and efficient and transforming learning environments and outcomes.

Data Guideposts: A Beacon for Consistent Data Organization Within an Asset-Based MTSS

Lead Presenter: Josh Sain, Assessment Implementation Director, Curriculum Associates

Co-Presenters: Peter Swerdzewski, AVP Assessment Insights, Curriculum Associates
Jane Donohue, Sr. Program Manager, Assessment Insights, Curriculum Associates

Description: Normative data are often at the center of MTSS decision making and implementation, yet they do not offer any information about a student's skill set- the information most needed when planning precise and responsive interventions. We will provide examples of how criterion-referenced data can support a more equitable and asset-based response to tiered academic intervention than systems that rely on normative-data alone. Examples will highlight reports from i-Ready Diagnostic, but other data sources can be used. Third-party and original research will be shared to support our conclusion.

Sowing Seeds: Shaping the Future of Rural Teacher Induction

Lead Presenter: Theresa Hernandez, ESD 105 Regional Literacy Coordinator and BEST Grant Coordinator , ESD 105, Yakima

Description: In this interactive workshop, participants will explore rural teacher induction through the lens of 'An Exploratory Single-Case Study of the BEST Induction Program in Central Washington State Rural School Districts.' They will also review implementation theory, learning how initiatives integrate into instructional practices. Leveraging this theory, they'll discover how to seamlessly normalize initiatives and gain practical steps to enhance their induction programs, improving teacher quality and student learning outcomes.

Take Action for Multilingual Literacy: When We Know Better, We Do Better

Lead Presenter: Molly Branson Thayer, Senior Director, Teaching Lab

Co-Presenters: Michele Morenz - Senior Manager, Teaching Lab

Description: In this session, we'll explore Teaching Lab's Multilingual Learner Action Guide for Literacy, developed by and for multilingual educators. This newly-developed resource emphasizes the importance of grounding in multilingual early literacy practices and measuring the impacts of their implementation to ensure effectiveness. Not only does this resource provide actionable resources for teachers, it also incorporates support for school and systems leaders that create the systems and environments for thriving literacy practices.

In this session, you'll discover how the ML Action Guide provides practical tools and resources that help translate theoretical concepts into actionable strategies, thereby supporting teacher practice. Educators can implement transformative literacy instruction with confidence, leading to measurable improvements in multilingual learners' proficiency and success.

Universal Screening and Local Norms: Use Existing Data Wisely to Improve Proportionality and Reduce Testing in the Highly Capable Referral Process

Lead Presenter: Brian Gabele, Director of Assessment and Program Evaluation, Clover Park School District

Co-Presenters: Jody Hess, OSPI Highly Capable Program Supervisor

Description: To satisfy the state's new universal HiCap screening requirement, districts shouldn't need to purchase and administer more assessments. New approaches to using pre-existing assessment data

more efficiently can better generate a diverse pool of HiCap referrals. This session covers how contextualizing student performance by norming assessment scores and considering students' student growth histories can further districts' goals to achieve proportionality in their HiCap programs.

WERA Postsecondary Transitions SIG: Planning a path forward

Lead Presenter: Shannon Calderone, Associate Professor, WSU-Everett

Description: Is your school, district, or organization committed to helping increase the number of students that transition into postsecondary options after high school? WERA created a new Special Interest Group (SIG) in 2024 focused on students' postsecondary transitions and held a convening of district partners and research groups to highlight ongoing statewide research in this area. With the second year of this SIG in progress, we are looking for feedback from WERA members on how to best engage our members in this work.

4:30-6:30

Networking Reception

Hosted by Curriculum Associates

El Gaucho
2119 Pacific Ave,
Tacoma, WA 98402



Curriculum Associates®

Friday, December 6

7:30-8:30

Check-in and Continental Breakfast

8:30-10:30 Opening Session

Welcome, Business Meeting, and Awards

Keynote Address

Dr. Kristina Ishmael, Former Deputy Director, US Department of Education's Office of Educational Technology

10:30-10:45 Transition time

10:45-12:00

Breakout Session #4

Keynote Follow-Up Session

Lead Presenter: Kristina Ishmael

Description: This session will give participants the opportunity to discuss ideas presented at the keynote presentation as well as raise questions and make comments.

Acceleration: Culture and Leadership

Lead Presenter: Amy Jefferis, EdD, Assessment Implementation Director, Curriculum Associates

Description: The key to acceleration is engaging students in grade-level content. By providing students with the necessary support and resources to access core content at grade level, schools can help ensure that every student has the opportunity to succeed. This requires a concerted effort by leadership to effectively communicate their vision, promote the right mindset, and set clear expectations for teachers and staff. In this session, participants will explore data-driven strategies and example systems that build culture and facilitate acceleration for all students. We know the why. Now, learn the how!

Decreasing Chronic Absenteeism through a Breakthrough Improvement Science Model

Lead Presenter: Shelby Lockhart, Executive Director, Lockhart Collaborative

Co-Presenters: Allyson Fritz (ESD 101 Attendance and Reengagement Coordinator), Malorie Karl (ESD 123 Attendance and Reengagement Coordinator), Casandra Gerlich (ESD 113 Attendance and Reengagement Coordinator)

Description: Learn about a Breakthrough Improvement Community that is using breakthrough improvement science to decrease chronic absenteeism in school while providing a model for data-informed systems improvement across the state.

Embracing Innovation to Reduce Opportunity Gaps for English Learners

Lead Presenter: Julie Kang, Director, Seattle University

Description: This session presents a case study of an innovative collaborative model between a university and an urban school district aimed at reducing opportunity gaps for English Learners (ELs). By connecting research to practice, we will delve into the infrastructure, design, and implementation of the ELL Endorsement Academy. The academy serves as a professional learning model for EL teachers, addressing their specific needs in curricular content and teaching methods. We will share initial findings from the teachers' participation in the academy and discuss the implications for practice.

Leading for Social Studies in Elementary Schools

Lead Presenter: Andrew Miller, Associate Director of Social Studies, OSPI

Co-Presenters: Dr. Terry Beck, Emeritus Professor of Education, University of Puget Sound

Description: Data shows that Social Studies is being marginalized in many elementary school classrooms, which has profound effects on student achievement and creating adults who are engaged citizens. In this session, leaders will understand the current state of social studies and learn leadership strategies to ensure all students receive a comprehensive studies education. Leaders will learn how to respond to misconceptions, use teacher evaluations to promote social studies and how to create high quality professional learning sessions.

OSPI FERPA Compliance Strategy and Exceptions

Lead Presenter: Cameron Marsden, Senior Data Analyst, OSPI

Description: The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) must follow the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This presentation will cover what FERPA requires, how OSPI has implemented these requirements, and when analysts can request exemptions to view and work with unprotected data. This presentation aims to provide understanding as to why analysts might see unprotected data for one organization and protected data for another and when they could request to see the protected data.

State Learning Standards Review

Lead Presenter: Angela Allen, Associate Director of Learning Standards, OSPI

Co-Presenters: Kara Todd, Special Projects and Assessment Coordinator, OSPI

Description: OSPI staff will share the status of the standards review project. Attendees will hear OSPI's professional development plan for educators regarding the updated ELA, math, and science learning standards. OSPI staff will outline the steps for adjusting the state summative assessments to align with the revised standards, including a draft timeline. Attendees will also learn about the status of the reviews for standards in World Languages, Health, Physical Education, and Financial Education.

Tracking Change in Dual Credit Access and Postsecondary Outcomes of Students in Washington

Lead Presenter: Liz Dehlbom, Senior Data Scientist, ERDC

Co-Presenters: Dani Fumia, Senior Research Scientist, Education Data & Research Center

Description: Dual credit courses give students the potential to earn both college and high school credit. ERDC has recently produced three publications relating to students' access to dual credit within K-12 and their postsecondary enrollment and credential outcomes to answer questions such as:

Are there dual credit deserts?

Where do students that take dual credit enroll in postsecondary education?

What type of postsecondary credentials do they attain?

We will engage attendees to understand what questions still need to be answered to inform ERDC's planned reporting and future dashboard enhancements.

Universal Screener Lessons: Districts Ranging from 1,800 to 180,000 Students

Lead Presenter: David Tudor, Director of K-12 Systems Change & Implementation, CEE

Co-Presenters: John Steach Ed D, CEO the Center for Educational Effectiveness, Erich Bolz, V.P. , Research & District Engagement, the Center for Educational Effectiveness

Description: The Center for Educational Effectiveness has been working closely with select districts (Cashmere, Port Angeles, and Gwinnett Co. GA) using our Student Universal Wellness Screener. The session will dive into what districts and CEE have learned relative to the development of MTSS systems, staffing structures, protocols and processes needed to effectively utilize screener data to positively impact students. As context is important, we will provide a comparison and contrast of how district size can impact this implementation.

12:00-1:00 Lunch

1:00-1:15 Transition time

1:15-2:30 Breakout Session #5

AI in College Admissions: Student and Teacher Insights

Lead Presenter: Jennifer Rubin, Senior Researcher, foundry10

Co-Presenters: Riddhi Divanji, Associate Researcher, foundry10; Ella Lombard, Postdoctoral Research Scientist, foundry10; Kat Chen, Assistant Researcher, foundry10

Description: This session explores how generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, are transforming the college admissions process for high school seniors and educators. It will share key findings from recent research by foundry10's Digital Technologies and Education Lab, addressing AI's use, ethics, and perceptions in the college admissions process. Attendees will gain evidence-based insights and actionable recommendations to navigate the evolving college admissions landscape.

Assessment Directors Network Meeting

Lead Presenter: Brian Rick, Director, Research & Assessment, Bellingham Public Schools

Co-Presenters: Brian Loffer (Bethel SD), Brian Rick (Bellingham SD) Nicholas Bontrager (Moses Lake SD) and Heather Stroh (Shoreline SD)

Description: This is the annual assessment directors networking meeting. Test coordinators and district assessment directors throughout the state are encouraged to attend to learn and network as we all continue to navigate the complexities of district and state assessment and reporting out to our various stakeholders.

This session will be facilitated by Brian Loffer (Bethel SD), Brian Rick (Bellingham SD) Nicholas Bontrager (Moses Lake SD) and Heather Stroh (Shoreline SD)

Boosting Student Engagement Through Teacher Leadership: Equity-Centered Approaches for Supporting Teachers

Lead Presenter: Sylvia Bagley, Assistant Teaching Professor of Equitable Instructional Leadership, UW, College of Education

Co-Presenters: Emily Fogel, Kitsap County and Katie Stickney, Olympia High School Freedom Farm

Description: Student engagement remains one of the most pressing concerns in schools. We offer a brief overview on what research says around student engagement across behavioral, emotional, and cognitive domains, and then discuss how teacher leaders play a crucial role in promoting culturally responsive engagement strategies. Our panel will share 2 different case studies: a school-of-focus coach centering student engagement in response to behavioral concerns; and collective teacher leadership at an alternative high school engaging the Three Rs - relationships, relevance, and responsibility - with students.

Building sustainable place-based research practitioner partnership among K12, postsecondary, and community-based partners: Early thoughts from Horizons partners

Lead Presenter: Min Hwangbo, Impact Director, Washington STEM

Co-Presenters: Amy Ly, J.D., Horizons Project Manager, Elevate - United Way of Blue Mountains
Kareen Borders, Ph.D., Executive Director, West Sound STEM Network, South Kitsap School District
Mollee Shultz, Ph.D., Director, Postsecondary Data & Impact, Puget Sound College and Career Network
Vicki Hrdina, Director, Career Readiness and P20 Pathway Development, ESD 112

Description: Join us for a panel discussion on the Horizons partnerships, where practitioners, educators, and community leaders come together to create meaningful change. Learn about pivotal 'aha' moments and challenges faced during the early implementation stages of this collaborative effort in building equitable partnerships. Our four partners will share their early thoughts on reimagining advising, dual credit, and financial aid completion strategies, all while weaving student and family voices to increase postsecondary attainment for those furthest away from educational justice as an overall goal.

Harnessing Your Northstar to Traverse Change & Welcome the Possibilities

Lead Presenter: Dr. Gloria Henderson, Director and Professor of Practice, University of Washington

Description: We will focus on the power of one's core values in guiding them as a lighthouse would guide ships into harbor. Just as rough waters can jolt a ship and cause it to become off course, one's core values can be the foundation in solidifying a course of action and advocacy towards meaningful change to support equitable outcomes, especially for those furthest away from educational, social, and economic justice. We will ground our work in the Cycle of Cultural Humility framework, developed by Dr. Henderson with adaptations from the social sciences & social justice fields.

Insights from Youth and Adult Allies in Supporting Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) in School Districts

Lead Presenter: Rachael Waldrop, Data Analyst, Kent School District

Co-Presenters: Kayanne McNeil, Student Liaison, Former Student, Evan Barbour, Principal, Vicky Bledsoe, School Counselor, and Lizzy Barker, Assistant Director of Research & Evaluation, Kent School District

Description: In this break-out session intended for school and district leaders, and research and evaluation specialists, a youth researcher and adult allies from the KSD research partnership team will share insights and promising practices for using a youth participatory action research (YPAR) approach to elevating student voice, supporting scientific inquiry, and enacting change in pursuit of student belongingness. Attendees will learn strategies adult allies can use to push forward youth-led initiatives without sacrificing youth leadership and agency.

Leadership Development for Educational Leaders: Supporting One Another's Growth and Development Through Co-mentoring Circles

Lead Presenter: Kathleen Cowin, Associate Professor (CT) Educational Leadership, WSU, Tri-Cities
Co-Presenters: Kyle Helm, Instructional Coach, Evergreen SD; Courtney Dallas, Instructional Coach, Pasco SD; Jessica Garcia, Federal Programs Coordinator, Brewster SD; Heather Thompson, Dean of Students, Curlew SD

Description: Learn about a process to create a safe, confidential, supportive, creative, and educative space where educational leaders meet to learn from one another in a community called a co-mentoring circle. Session participants will hear first-hand from co-mentoring circle participants about their experiences creating the co-mentoring circle, and then once the co-mentoring circle is created, how work done in the circle can be applied to their continuing development as educational leaders.

Practical Strategies for Embedding SEL into School Systems

Changing Students = Changing Systems

Lead Presenter: Dr. Heather McMullen, Assistant Superintendent, White River School District

Co-Presenters: Lori Curtis, Executive Director of Learning, Instructional & Technology Services; Nina Markey, Principal, Elkridge Elementary; Jen Schutz, Principal, Foothills Elementary (White River School District)

Description: How have today's students changed, and how should our schools respond? This session dives into this vital question and the research on changing student needs. You'll learn practical strategies for embedding SEL instruction into the PK-12th grade school day while redesigning Tier 1 instruction to support all learners. Hear firsthand from leaders in the White River School District about their collaborative approach to enhancing student learning district-wide.

There's No Telling Where the Money Went...or is There?

Lead Presenter: John Steach, CEO, CEE

Description: How did the state of Washington State school finance get to where it is today? Learn about the lawsuits, legislative actions, and key players that have shaped the landscape of school funding. This will include a dive into the McCleary "fix" along with the myths and facts around what was intended and what really happened with the implementation. Knowing the history and current impacts can help us inform what is needed in the future.

2:30-4:00 Team Time

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