

<http://www.wera-web.org>

President's Column



WERA Colleagues,
Thank you to everyone who presented or who came and learned together at our December Conference. Reviews of the content shared/learned and connections made were very high. WERA is its members. Thank you for making it a success. We have similarly high hopes for our Symposium occurring on March 12, just as this newsletter is being

is being published. Our keynoter is the VP of the Carnegie Foundation and we have breakout sessions scheduled with practitioners from all parts of the educational system. We look forward to seeing many of you there to learn about Improvement Science.

Reflecting on this year, it has been a year of change. I know my own district is not alone in dealing with a tighter budget. These often result in fewer professional development opportunities. Simultaneously, these cuts *increase* the value of associations like WERA. We will continue to provide high-quality and high-impact conferences, along with venues to network with peers through the WERA-Connect listserv and Hot Topics Webinars. We want to create new Special Interest Groups. We welcome your ideas on how WERA can help you meet your professional development needs.

Within WERA, our Executive Secretary asked to be released from her contract in March. We plan to post a Request for Qualifications soon to recruit a new person or organization to support WERA. Please watch for the RFQ and share it with your networks.

Our WERA Educational Journal and Newsletter are also getting new leadership. With Pete's departure from the role of Journal Editor, we realized it was a huge job. In response, we will change to an Editorial Board with a pool of article reviewers. (Please see the request for volunteers to help review articles elsewhere in this newsletter.) Tony Smith has graciously agreed to serve as the transitional Chair of the Editorial Board and he is handing off coordinating The Standard Deviation to Julie DeBolt. Thanks to Pete, Tony, & Julie!

Please save December 4-6, 2019 for our next Winter Conference. A call for breakout sessions will be coming soon. I look forward to seeing you there.

Paul Stern
WERA President

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Upcoming Event

WERA/OSPI Annual Conference

Pre-Conference Workshops December 4, 2019

Conference December 5-6, 2019

Hilton Seattle Airport Hotel and Conference Center

Register at the WERA web site:

<http://www.wera-web.org>

Executive Secretary Search

We are looking for a new Executive Secretary/Coordinator to support WERA's activities starting in June. A Request for Qualifications has been posted to our website at www.wera-web.org/job-opportunities. Please share this with your networks so that WERA can find an excellent candidate. Proposals are due to WERA by April 15, 2019.

Please reach out to a current board member <https://www.wera-web.org/officers> with your questions.

The Standard Deviation is published spring, fall, and winter as an online newsletter. Submissions are welcomed from WERA members and others. Kindly submit articles for consideration using APA format to Julie DeBolt at jdebolt@auburn.wednet.edu Previous issues and submission guidelines are available online at <http://www.wera-web.org>

Highlight: December WERA/OSPI Annual Conference 2018 Keynote

One of the keynote speakers at the WERA research conference 2018 was Adeyemi Stenbridge, a “coach and thought partner to teachers and administrators with a particular interest in the design of culturally responsive systems and learning experiences for students.” With the 2018 conference theme in mind, *Disrupting the Status Quo: Ensuring Equity, Engagement and Achievement for all Washington Learners*, Dr. Stenbridge’s talk proved engaging and thought provoking. Thinking back on this motivating talk, several points come to mind as enduringly memorable and important to the mission and work of WERA and its members.

If we are going to think about equity we need to talk about love

- “Love should be considered a mentor text for equity; if we’re not careful that word, equity, can become meaningless speak to make ourselves sound sophisticated.”
- “I love teachers! Teachers who humble themselves to the craft, who think deeply; they are my personal superheroes.”
- “Love is a performative utterance, performing the idea itself; hard to believe if their actions are inconsistent with the meaning of love.”

If we are serious about disrupting the status quo, we need to get where the term equity is backed up with action

- Equity and Pedagogy: “There is sometimes a disconnect between these two terms. Pedagogy questions are about how we teach; equity questions are about whom we teach. We need to talk about equity and pedagogy in the same space. That space is culturally responsive teaching.”
- Are the core values and key ideas relative to equity showing up in our work? 4 conclusions:
 1. The ways we assess schools currently using standardized state level tests are not in the best interests of teaching and learning
 2. The ways we assess schools currently betrays the most basic premise of psychometrics: Valid assessments measure most directly what we most want to know
 3. Ways we assess schools provide little to no useful direction for growth to teachers or students
 4. Instructional planning for conceptual understandings can lead directly and indirectly to the equity gap closing experiences for students; but our over investment in standardized tests undermines the supports and efforts necessary to develop good habits and effective design

Responsive environments are those in which students’ assets can be recognized and where they can develop knowledge and identities through experience

- When asked, “What do you think you will remember and understand about what we learn in our word detective unit?” first-grade children in a responsive classroom environment responded:
- “I will advocate for myself, go back and fix the words, flip to the picture, go back to the page where you were at.”
- “We need to try our best and not give up. You can’t give up and you advocate for yourself, you help yourself. You need to do something to see.”
- “Always remember to be advocating for yourself, it’s good for your mind, and never give up as a reader. You should advocate for yourself because you have to have it in your life... You should never give up as a reader because reading helps your mind.”

Putting ideas into practice: Take-aways

- Focus on standards and testing through an interdisciplinary teaching lens
- Teach with a focus on conceptual understanding, drawing from academic knowledge and your background and full self.
- Embrace productive struggle, as focused effort is necessary for growth.
- Emphasize responsive learning communities so students can grow their identities and know they belong
- Align teaching with what’s good for children, not just with tests. The institution of public education depends on this.

Overall Dr. Stenbridge’s talk was a thoughtful and energizing way to begin a full day of interesting ideas and exciting discussions at the WERA conference!

Antony Smith
WERA Member



The Standard Deviation

Newsletter of the Washington Educational Research Association (WERA)

March 2019

Call for Papers for the WERA Educational Journal (WEJ)

The *WEJ* is WERA's peer-reviewed journal that is published twice a year (in November and May) and is available to the general public on WERA's website at: wera.memberclicks.net/the-wera-educational-journal. The first issue was published in July 2010 and the issues have grown in length and sophistication over the years. The writing style is easy to read, the articles have different formats (e.g., academic papers, reprints of existing noteworthy reports, book reviews) and use both quantitative and qualitative methods, and the topics covered have practical applications for WERA's members. In some cases, dissertations are summarized into the journal's format. Here are a few of the topics covered in the *WEJ*:

- Early childhood education
- Curriculum and instruction
- State and national standards
- Professional development
- Special populations (e.g., gifted, ELLs, students with disabilities)
- Assessment results covering various content areas
- Early warning indicators
- Social and emotional issues
- School and district effectiveness
- Teacher and principal evaluation
- Education finance and policy
- Educational technology
- Educational leadership
- Educator preparation

The November 2018 issue will be available soon. If you want to submit a paper for the *WEJ*, see the submission guidelines posted on the WERA website at: wera.memberclicks.net/the-wera-educational-journal. The deadline for the Autumn 2019 issue is May 15, 2019. If you have questions about the process or about possible submissions, email the *WEJ* editor at smithant@uw.edu.

Call for Nominations for WERA Grants and Awards

The Washington Educational Research Association (WERA) sponsors competitive grants (maximum award of \$5,000) for studies of educational issues. Studies lasting up to 18 months may be proposed. The purpose of the awards is to support studies that focus on instructional improvement, classroom assessment, educational measurement at both the district and state level, and the evaluation of education programs. Research and evaluation proposals focusing on issues associated with equity or that include partnerships across institutions are particularly encouraged. Preference will be given to applicants who are current WERA members and have not received a previous WERA grant. Continuation of previous WERA grants will not be funded.

Grant application deadline February 15 2020: Electronic submission of applications is required through an email attachment. Such emails must bear a "sent date" of no later than February 15 2020. Acknowledgment of electronic submission will be sent to the primary contact. If there are materials in the application which cannot be sent electronically or if electronic submission is not possible, mailed, faxed, or hand carried materials must be delivered to the WERA Executive Secretary by midnight on the due date. Do not send materials for which acknowledgement has already been received. Receipt of all applications will be acknowledged as soon as possible by the chair of the Grants Committee.

Questions about the grant application may be sent via email to the Grants Chair up to one week prior of the grant deadline. Please refer to the grants tab at www.wera-web.org for more information on the research grants process and for a copy of the application materials.

Applications should be e-mailed to:

Brandon Lagerquist, Grant Committee Chair

E-mail: weraoffice@gmail.com

Please include Research Grant Application in the subject line.



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Newsletter of the Washington Educational Research Association (WERA)

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Call for Reviewers for the WERA Educational Journal (WEJ)

Why Become a WERA Educational Journal Reviewer?

Becoming a reviewer for the WERA Educational Journal can provide you with an exciting professional experience. As a reviewer, you'll contribute to the development of cutting-edge articles addressing a range of educational topics of statewide and regional interest.

What are the Expected Qualifications?

We are seeking a diverse group of reviewers with equally diverse perspectives on a host of educational issues and problems. If you are an administrator, practitioner, higher education researcher, graduate student, or perhaps someone with a keen interest in educational issues, we need you! Topics covered by past submitting authors have included the following:

School Improvement
ELL/Bilingual Education
K-12 Leadership
Instructional Leadership
College Readiness
Assessment & Testing
MTSS

STEM/STEAM
Math Education
K-12 Finance
Teacher Evaluation
Cycles of Inquiry/Action Research
Dual Credit
Social Emotional Learning

What are the Steps Involved in Reviewing an Article?

Reviewers will typically be asked to complete their appraisal of a submitted paper within one month of receipt. They will then be expected to complete the Rating Scale for the journal and write a critical evaluation of the manuscript either by marking up the manuscript and/or providing a written evaluation and submitting to the assigning Editorial Board member. Manuscript author(s) receive a copy of the review without the reviewer's name. Journal reviewers can expect to read and comment on two to three manuscripts per year.

How to Contact Us:

If you are interested in being considered as a reviewer, please send an e-mail with a copy of your resume to the WERA Journal Editor, smithant@uw.edu. In the body of your email, please also include a list of topical preferences of primary interest to you.

WERA Hot Topics Webinar

WERA is excited to launch a free webinar series called "Hot Topics" to its members. The "Hot Topics" webinars occur 3 – 4 times a year specific to relevant education issues and/or highlight WERA offerings that will be of interest to members.

Here is the first Hot Topics webinar. The topic is the new student perception survey work that WA has embarked on and is now available to educators across the state. This has been a 3+ year project focused on gathering student perceptions of instruction and we were excited to host two integral people who will discuss this work – Sue Anderson, Director of Educator Effectiveness/Educator Growth and Development at OSPI and Pete Bylsma, Director of Assessment and Program Evaluation at the Mukilteo School District. Facilitating this discussion was WERA Board Member and Executive Director at the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession Nasue Nishida.

To learn more about our WERA Hot Topic Webinars use this link:

<https://www.wera-web.org/hot-topics-webinar>

Nasue Nishida

WERA Board Member



The Standard Deviation

Newsletter of the Washington Educational Research Association (WERA)
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The WERA Board, 2018-19

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