



“Coming Together to Build Community and Advance Our Purposes”

Dear Colleagues,

I am relieved to have cooler nights and (maybe) much needed rain. The colors are beginning to show here and the smoke from wild fires seems to be lessening. (I hope that is true for our Wenatchee area friends as well.) It is fall and the holidays are fast approaching. Nonetheless, this is an active time for our committees and chapters as we strive to define and fulfill our goals for 2022-2023.

Fall Board Follow-up

Evaluations and verbal feedback indicates Fall Board workshops were a success. Members really appreciated having sessions for all officers and committees. The pre-conference workshop on “Mental Health and Educators: a Crisis” was attended by over 100 people and proved to be a good introduction to the topics of what and why mental health, intervention strategies, and potential legislative actions we might take to improve conditions for active educators. Monique and I have sent out the video link to all those who registered. Thank you for all you did to help make both days successful.

WA State Unity Project: Resiliency through Communication, Connections, and Commitment

As we focus on building resiliency for our chapters, I have suggested that one way to do that is to have service projects that members connect to and become committed to. I am asking that you consider how to work with other chapters in your area to provide service to the community and/or to active and early career educators (maybe a special collection at your area workshop).

Please submit the title or a brief description of your service project(s) on the Strategic Action Plan (SAP) form you are submitting to Susan Fritts by October 25th. The service question is #4 on the form.

Timelines/Reminders

A few reminders:

1. Chapter yearbooks are now due. You should have sent one to each of the following persons: state president, state 1st vice president, state 2nd vice president, treasurer, executive secretary, past president and your area liaison.
2. State Committee Chairs – your action plans for 2022-2023, including budget and the new addendum page (regarding budget input for 2023-24) are now due. If you need an extension for whatever reason, please contact Susan Fritts. <mailto:susan.frittsdkg1@gmail.com>
3. Chapter Strategic Action Plans (SAP) are due by October 25, 2022 to Susan Fritts and myself <mailto:p.bennettformandkgwa@gmail.com>. Enter what your chapter has decided to do in response to each of the SAP goal areas (membership, leadership development, and relevant programs) as well as to the question about your service projects. If you need the form or assistance, contact Susan Fritts.
4. Chapter treasurers will need to submit the IRS Form 990 no later than Nov. 15th. Contact Pat Russell if you or your treasurer have any questions <mailto:p.russell@comcast.net>.
5. November 1st is the deadline for submitting proposed revisions to the WSO by-laws and/or standing rules. The form to be used is on the state website under resources/forms. Send the completed form to Jannette Manuel <mailto:jannettemanuel@hotmail.com>.
6. December 1st is the deadline for nominations for state officers for the next biennium, as well as for a 3 year position on the State Nominations Committee and a 5 year term on the Rachel Royston board. See the state web site for details. <https://www.dkgwa.org>

7. If you have not already done so, please submit names of chapter representatives for Educational Excellence, Membership, and Legislative contact to Sherri Wagemann.
<mailto:sherri.wagemannkgwa@gmail.com>

Mental Health Resolution

The resolution “On Recognizing Mental Health Issues for Educational Staff and Promoting Support Services” was approved by the state Executive Board on September 24, 2022. It calls on the WSO and chapters to carry out the following activities: (1) **educate themselves** on the issues and needs related to mental health for educational staff through study, workshops, and other avenues; (2) **inform members of current legislation** related to mental health services for educators so that they may take appropriate actions, including to **initiate, endorse and support desirable legislation**; (3) promote destigmatization of mental illness through **dissemination of information** on successful school-based treatment programs, supports and other resources; and (4) engage in a wide range of activities that **demonstrate emotional support for educators**. There are no specific rules about what this means at any given chapter level. We hope that through readings, attending state workshops, and/or your own programs, chapters will accomplish the first task. Supporting legislation may mean direct contact to legislators in your area, or a letter writing campaign, or talking to members of the community. Your chapter might disseminate information about the OSPI help site or the new 988 emergency call number. And engaging in emotional support can range from treats and cards to recognitions to mentoring. It is whatever your chapter determines it can do. Thank you for your support of this much needed initiative. Contact Marge Lofstrom, chair of the Education Policy and Legislation Committee, for questions or ideas.
<mailto:mtlofstrom@gmail.com>

Chapter Health

Finally, I want to say a word about chapter health. No matter how big or how small a chapter, every chapter needs to be vigilant about its health – to check its temperature and take actions early on to revitalize and sustain the chapter. Your area liaisons and state officers are available to assist your chapter to assess its strengths and needs. Don’t wait until you are in your last gasping days!

But if you are wondering if dissolution is in your near future, please know that there is a process and multiple steps, beginning with contacting your state Membership Committee, to be accomplished before any dissolution vote may be taken. The Membership Committee will work with you first to see what actions might be plausible for re-vitalizing your chapter, for expanding membership, for including you in orientation sessions in your area to invite new members, etc. The Dissolution Chair (past state president) will help you become aware of and complete the required steps **if** dissolution seems to be the only resort.

We are all hurt by losing a chapter, losing our friends and colleagues from our Society. We all want to help every chapter to be in a position of growth, not decline. We certainly don’t want to take that Board vote to approve dissolving a chapter. So let us all work together to promote chapter health and help each other sustain our Society and its good works.

I look forward to seeing you all virtually in the coming months. Please invite me (or other officers) to your chapter meetings, area workshops, committee meetings and so on. The more we are connected, the more we can commit to building our community. Happy fall!

As always,
Pat B7