

WFIS eMemo

October 2010

WFIS is off to a great start this year, and it is all because of the wonderful support we have from our member schools. We are the ONLY statewide organization that represents all of your interests as independent private education programs. Because this is a busy time of year, you may want to set this *e-Memo* aside until you have had more time to read it, but STOP and take a few minutes. We have a very special announcement this month and we don't want you to miss a thing!

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Message from the Chair

Dear WFIS Members and Constituents,

I write to you today to announce that Washington Federation of Independent Schools' Executive Director Judy Jennings will be retiring in June 2011. I share this news with a sense of accomplishment in all that WFIS has achieved in the past six years under Judy's leadership, as well as optimism and excitement for the future of the organization.

It is almost impossible to fully describe and appreciate the depth and breadth of the work that Judy has done for WFIS and for all private schools in Washington State. For those of you who have been lucky enough to meet her in person, you know that she is a force with which to be reckoned and that her passion and belief in the need for independent, non-public education drives her work state-wide.

I would like to highlight just a few of the milestones reached by WFIS under Judy's leadership:

- State Board of Education (SBE) recognizes private school accrediting agencies
- Private schools representative with full voting privileges added to the SBE
- WFIS appointee included on the Early Learning Council
- Private schools exempted from standardized sex education and HPV education laws
- Private school input for health and safety rules for all schools
- In collaboration with the Council for American Private Education, private school teachers included in federal loan forgiveness program
- Legislation to allow private schools access to FBI background checks
- The first Title II statewide conference offered, free of charge, to all private school teachers

In addition, Judy is recognized within the state and nation as a

[Fran Baum, Agent](#)

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leader and advocate in private education. Her work for private schools will support the thousands of students, administrators, teachers and families in private schools for many, many years.

Judy's retirement comes at a time when WFIS has achieved many important goals. Additionally, the Board is committed to the WFIS mission, *to strengthen education for the students of Washington State as the advocate and voice of independent schools.*

With thanks to Judy Jennings for her seven years of service, and on behalf of the WFIS Board of Directors,

Briel Schmitz, Chair
WFIS Board of Directors
Director, The Spruce Street School

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From the Director:

Dear Member Schools, Colleagues and Friends of WFIS,

In 1967 I was handed my first teaching contract in the Puyallup School District. The day I walked into my first 7th grade class, I was hooked on teaching and on education. The journey of 44 years as an educator has taken many forms: Department Chair, union representative, private school teacher, WIAA and NFHS board member, private school principal, superintendent, WFIS legislative committee member, and most recently lobbyist and Executive Director for WFIS. As I look back over the years, I am profoundly grateful to all of my mentors, friends and colleagues who have influenced my passion for seeing that all children should have the opportunity for a world-class education. I believe that can be accomplished with a minimum (or less) of government support or intrusion. Making the transition from public education to private education in 1980 was not difficult because I cherish the freedoms that we have as private school educators. We can educate those students that come to us based on the mutual values and mission we share with the parents of the children we serve and the voluntary communities which form our schools.

Throughout my seven-year tenure at WFIS, it has been my goal, on behalf of all of our member schools, to see to it that these freedoms are not eroded by government mandates or societal pressures at any level of PreK-12 education. I have worked side by side with other organizations, both statewide and nationally, to write and promote legislation that will benefit our schools. I have been blessed by the support of every board member that I have had the privilege to work and learn from. I believe that, right now, WFIS is in a very strong position. We are a well-respected and influential organization within our state and nation. I will be retiring in June of 2011 from my position as Executive Director, knowing that this organization is ready and prepared

[Choice](#)

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**WFIS 2010-11
Calendar:**

Oct. 29, 2010
Constituency Leaders
Gathering

Nov. 9, 2010
Private Schools
Roundtable, Spokane

Nov. 10, 2010
Private Schools
Roundtable,
Sunnyside

Dec. 9, 2010
WFIS Board Meeting

February 10, 2011
Winter Dinner and
Best of Washington
Awards

April 14, 2011
WFIS Board Meeting

June 2011
Statewide Private
Schools Conference

to take the next steps to continue the 41 years of organizational excellence we have experienced. I am excited for WFIS and its future.

Thank you for your support and willingness to work together as "the advocate and voice of private education in Washington."

Sincerely,

Judy Jennings
Executive Director

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Congratulations on Workshop Excellence!

Our sincere thanks to Terry Hippenhammer and Janet Hinirchs at Puget Sound ESD for combining efforts with Judy Jennings and Jan Morrison of WFIS to present a fantastic Private Schools Workshop on October 19! Presentation Materials from Private Schools Day 2010 will soon be available at <http://www.psesd.org/>.

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Eastern Washington Private Schools Roundtable

*All schools are invited to participate
in this FREE event offered at two locations!*

November 9, 2010 (9:30 - 11:30 am)
Gonzaga Prep, Spokane

November 10, 2010 (9:30 - 11:30 am)
Sunnyside Christian, Sunnyside

Topics will include:

- Washington's Early Learning Standards and Implementation
- The Rise of AdvancED
- State Board Adoption of new high school graduation requirements
- Private School Advisory Committee update
- Private Education from a D.C. perspective
- What are your concerns and needs from WFIS?



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The Washington
Federation of
Independent Schools

Please RSVP to jmorrison@wfis.org or
253.912.9347 as soon as possible!

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CAPE News

October 2010

The October 2010 issue of CAPE Outlook, a monthly newsletter from the Council for American Private Education, is available for download as a free PDF document by clicking [here](#) or by entering the following URL in your browser:

<http://www.capenet.org/pdf/Outlook358.pdf>

In Outlook this month:

- Education Secretary Meets with CAPE's Board
- "Waiting for Superman" Debate
- Religious Schools Anchor Urban Neighborhoods
- New CAPE Videos to Add to Your Web Site
- 2010 Blue Ribbon Schools
- And More!

Earlier this month, the U.S. Department of Education announced the awarding of \$39 million in Safe and Supportive School (53) grants to 11 states. More on the program is available in [this news release](#) from USDE, including a list of states that were awarded grants and the amounts they will receive.

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Best of Washington Nominations Are Now Open!

[Click here to request your nomination form](#)

**Deadline for Nominations is
December 3, 2010**

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The Rise of AdvancED

In an paper dated November 9, 2009 and entitled *The Rise of AdvancED and the Potential Impact upon Private Schools*, Meade Thayer, Executive Director of the Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools, sounded the alarm that AdvancED was changing the accreditation landscape across our nation. The article

(WFIS) is the umbrella organization for private education in Washington State. With seventy percent of the independent student population enrolled in member schools, WFIS is the only statewide vehicle for regular communication and strategic development between the many different constituencies. WFIS schools are affiliates of the Catholic dioceses in the state; the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI); the Christian Schools International (CSI); Lutheran Schools; Montessori schools; the Pacific Northwest Association of Independent Schools (PNAIS); the Seventh-day Adventist Schools (SDA); and numerous other religious and independent institutions, including the Waldorf Schools, Hutterian Brethren, and those institutions with sponsorship within the Jewish and Islamic communities. The WFIS Board of Directors consists of eighteen school heads representing the major constituencies chosen regionally by their respective bodies. WFIS is networked with similar organizations in other states through the Council for American Private Education (CAPE).

was very informative, and I urge all member schools to study the issue of regional accreditation with their school accreditation teams and within their statewide associations.

AdvancED has recently moved to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and a completely separate agreement with Christian Schools International (CSI). Rumor on the street is that AdvancED will be attempting similar exclusive relationships with more of these types of nation-wide associations. The exclusivity is further demonstrated with the addition of a Confidentiality and Non-Disclosure Agreement that makes it even more difficult to share information and discussions on best practices among schools that are not in the same associations.

I understand the allure that AdvancED holds for many of our nation-wide associations. They also represent schools in states where AdvancED holds the keys to funding that non-public schools in Washington state cannot access. The accrediting agency in some of these states lends integrity to diplomas and transcripts for non-public schools. For many schools, AdvancED is the only game in town. For those schools and in those states, AdvancED offers a meaningful and viable avenue to accreditation, but Washington is not one of those states.

The Washington Federation of Independent Schools (WFIS) has fought long and hard to bind us together so that we can celebrate our independence. Our diversity has been consolidated to improve student learning in the state of Washington through the work of groups like the Private School Advisory Committee (PSAC) and the Northwest Accreditation Commission (NWAC). This has manifested itself further in the recent teacher training opportunities held in Seattle and Spokane last June. Allowing AdvancED to dictate who we can talk to about something as important as accreditation flies in the face of everything we have been attempting to accomplish.

I encourage you to talk with your regional and national associations about AdvancED. At the same time, continue to act on the commitment that we in the state of Washington have made to improve student learning by encouraging dialogue of improving student learning within the various schools that provide parents with choice.

Judy Jennings

Executive Director

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CORRECTION to "Insurance Alert:"

According to a recent Washington State Attorney General's opinion, as of December 31, 2010, **NO PRIVATE SCHOOLS** may participate in public insurance pools. Please contact your insurance broker for more information if you feel your school may be affected by this ruling. *(Our previous article referred to only faith-based schools.)*

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SAVE THE DATE!

Thursday, February 10, 2011

WFIS Winter Dinner and Best of Washington Awards

Keynote Speaker: **Maureen Dowling, Ed.D.**

Office of Non-public Education

Office of Innovation and Improvement

U. S. Department of Education

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The Bulletin Board

Assistant Heads Association (AHA) is a national organization that promotes collegiality and disseminates information among those who serve in that capacity in independent schools. We provide a listserve through NAIS on which members raise and respond to topics of interest. There are no membership dues and any assistant head may request to be placed on the listserve by e-mailing rwylant@harveyschool.org.

Weatherfest

Sunday, January 23, 2011, Noon to 4 p.m.

Washington State Convention Center

<http://www.ametsoc.org/meet/annual/weatherfest.html>

Washington State Library Updates

<http://blogs.sos.wa.gov/library/>

Bridges to Understanding - Digital Storytelling in the Classroom Workshop

Our next educator workshop is January 8, 2011. Participants learn how to teach their students to produce digital stories about their lives, communities and common global issues, and then share them with their peers around the world. September's workshop sold out early so [register](#) soon!

Send Bulletin Board articles to jmorrison@wfis.org.

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