

WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION (SBE)

Complete Governance Profile

Date: December 12, 2025

Source: Comprehensive research for Moses Lake School District transparency project

Scope: All 16 current board members + institutional powers

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Washington State Board of Education is a **16-member policy board** that has significant power over Moses Lake schools through:

- **Graduation requirements** (credit requirements, subject areas, pathway options)
- **Charter school authorization** (approves district authorizers, oversees performance)
- **Basic education compliance** (ensures districts meet state standards)
- **Legislative advocacy** (annual platform guides policy priorities)
- **Rules and waivers** (administrative authority over implementation)

KEY FINDING: The State Board has more direct power over day-to-day school operations than the Legislature, yet receives less public scrutiny. Members are a mix of appointed (7), elected by school boards (5+1 private), students (2), and OSPI Superintendent (ex officio).

CURRENT PRIORITIES (2026): Defensive posture - protecting existing programs and funding rather than expansion, with focus on civil rights protections, student supports, and FutureReady graduation review.

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1. BOARD STRUCTURE & SELECTION

Composition (16 Members Total)

7 APPOINTED BY GOVERNOR: - Confirmed by state Senate - Must demonstrate “interest in public schools and support of educational improvement” - Governor must “consider the diverse population of the state” - 4-year terms, maximum two consecutive terms - Currently: 5 active appointed members (Positions 3-7)

5 ELECTED BY SCHOOL BOARDS: - Elected by Washington school board members (not public vote) - Regional representation: 2 from Eastern WA, 3 from Western WA - Elections administered by Washington State School Directors’ Association (WSSDA) - 4-year terms, maximum two consecutive terms - These are school board members electing other school board members to state level

1 PRIVATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE: - Elected by private school directors - 4-year term, maximum two consecutive terms - Currently: Jan Brown (Tacoma)

2 STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES: - Selected by Board in collaboration with Association of Washington Student Leaders - Must be current sophomores when selected (serve as juniors/seniors) - 2-year terms (July to June) - VOTING members with full participation rights - Receive up to \$100/day stipend + travel reimbursement

1 EX OFFICIO (NONVOTING ON SOME ISSUES): - State Superintendent of Public Instruction (Chris Reykdal) - No term limit

IMPORTANT NOTE: This is NOT a board where voters directly elect members. The public votes for local school board members, who then elect 5 of the 16 state board members. The Governor appoints 7. Only the OSPI Superintendent is elected statewide by voters.

Current Leadership (2025)

- **Chair:** Mary Fertakis (Elected, Region 3 - Western WA)
- **Past Chair:** Bill Kallappa II (Appointed, Position 3)
- **Vice-Chair:** Brooke Brown (Appointed, Position 4)
- **Executive Committee:** Fertakis, Kallappa, Brown, Dr. Angela Griffin, Dr. Susana Reyes

Staff Support

- 12 professional staff members
 - Executive Director: Randy Spaulding
 - Government Relations & Policy Analyst: Yazmin Carretero
 - Various policy directors and analysts
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2. POWERS OVER EDUCATION

Direct Authority (What SBE Controls)

Graduation Requirements (RCW 28A.305.130) - Sets ALL state-level high school graduation requirements - Determines credit requirements (currently 24 credits) - Mandates specific subject areas (English, Math, Science, Social Studies, etc.) - Approves alternative pathway options - Sets assessment scores for graduation pathways - Districts may ADD but cannot SUBTRACT from state requirements

Current Requirements (Class of 2024 and Beyond): - 4 credits English - 3 credits Math (student chooses 3rd credit based on interest) - 3 credits Science (student chooses 3rd credit based on interest) - 3 credits Social Studies (1 U.S. History, 0.5 Contemporary World, 0.5 Civics, 1 elective) - 2 credits World Language OR Career & Technical Education OR Arts - 1 credit Health & Fitness - 1 credit Arts - 0.5 credit Occupational Education - 2 credits Personalized Pathway Requirement - 4.5 credits Electives

Non-Credit Requirements: - High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP) - Graduation Pathway Option (8 different pathways available) - Washington State History & Government (typically middle school)

Charter School Authority (Chapter 28A.710 RCW) - Approves school districts that want to authorize charter schools - Oversees performance and effectiveness of charter school authorizers - Certifies charter school applications (ensures within 40-school cap) - Annual charter school performance report - Can review and terminate poorly performing authorizers - Participates in Washington State Charter School Commission (SBE appoints designee)

Basic Education Compliance - Ensures districts comply with Program of Basic Education (RCW 28A.150) - Reviews and approves district waiver requests - Can grant waivers for: - School year length - Student-to-teacher ratios - Other administrative rules for restructuring plans - Emergency waivers (COVID-era GREW program)

Rulemaking Authority (WAC 180) - Adopts administrative rules to implement education laws - WAC 180-51: Graduation requirements - WAC 180-16: Requirements for becoming a teacher - Various other educational standards and procedures

Advocacy & Strategic Oversight - Annual legislative platform (guides advocacy) - Recommendations to Legislature on education policy - Collaboration with OSPI, Governor, and Legislature - Public reporting on education system health

Limitations (What SBE Cannot Do)

CANNOT: - Pass laws (only Legislature can do this) - Directly control district budgets (Legislature appropriates funds) - Hire or fire teachers (local district authority) - Set teacher salaries (collective bargaining + state funding) - Determine local curriculum (district authority within state standards) - Override local school board decisions on most operational matters -

Expand charter school cap beyond 40 (requires legislative action)

RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER ENTITIES: - Works WITH Legislature (cannot override laws)
- Works WITH OSPI (implementation agency) - Works WITH local districts (cannot micromanage) - Oversees charter authorizers (but doesn't directly run charter schools)

3. CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

Background

Washington voters approved Initiative 1240 in November 2012, authorizing charter schools. However, the Washington Supreme Court ruled the law unconstitutional in 2015 (League of Women Voters v. State). The Legislature re-enacted charter school law with amendments in 2016 (E2SSB 6194).

Current Status (December 2025)

Charter Schools in Washington: - 16 active charter schools (as of 2024 report) - Approximately 5,000 students served - ~1,200 students on waiting lists statewide - **40-school cap** (no new applications accepted since April 2021) - Legislature has NOT extended authorization window for new schools

SBE's Charter School Responsibilities:

- 1. Approves District Authorizers**
 - School districts must apply to SBE for authorization authority
 - SBE screens, approves, contracts with, and oversees district performance
 - Currently: Spokane Public Schools is an active district authorizer
- 2. Oversees Authorizer Performance**
 - Reviews authorizer effectiveness annually
 - Can conduct special reviews if problems arise
 - Has authority to terminate poorly performing authorizers
 - Monitors charter school closures and patterns
- 3. Certifies Applications**
 - Ensures new charter applications fit within 40-school cap
 - Certification occurs between approval and contract ratification
- 4. Annual Reporting**
 - Comprehensive charter school performance report
 - Includes academic performance, operational status, financial health
 - Reviews teacher certification compliance
- 5. Participates in Charter School Commission**
 - SBE appoints designee to 11-member Commission
 - Commission serves as statewide charter authorizer
 - Commission authorizes most charter schools in state

Charter School Controversies

Position Conflicts: - Chris Reykdal (OSPI) “vehemently opposes” charter school expansion - Many board members support charter schools as educational option - WEA (teachers union) opposes charter schools - 1,200+ families on waiting lists cannot enroll due to cap

Recent Issues: - Several charter schools have closed unexpectedly (Puget Sound, Walla Walla) - 2023 legislation (HB 1744) added complaint process after closures - Funding inequity: Charter school students receive less per-pupil funding - Staffing: Many charter schools have non-fully-certified instructors (allowed under supervision)

Legislative Stalemate: - SBE supported lifting 40-school cap in 2021 and 2022 - Legislation failed both times - No new charter schools can be authorized until Legislature acts - Appears unlikely to change under current political climate

4. CURRENT MEMBER PROFILES (ALL 16)

4A. ELECTED MEMBERS (Regions 1-5)

RON MABRY (Region 1 - Eastern Washington)

City: Kennewick

Term: January 2024 - January 2028 (First Term)

How Selected: Elected by school board members from Eastern Washington Region 1

Background: - Former Kennewick School Board member and WSSDA President - Lives in Kennewick with wife Devon - Two sons (Zack and Isaac) attended Kennewick schools - Leadership experience at WSSDA (state school directors association)

Education Expertise: - Direct experience with “burgeoning enrollments and shrinking financial support” - Successfully proposed legislative amendments on funding, special education, security, free meals - Understands challenges facing Eastern Washington districts

PDC Record: - 1 complaint case: Kennewick School Board (March 2019) - **DISMISSED** - Issue: Board approved motion to send letter supporting bond Proposition 1, then rescinded it - PDC found no actual violation, reminded board of proper procedures - No fines, no penalties

Political Notes: - Described by opponents as “known liberal school board member” in 2023 campaign materials - This characterization used in attack ads against another candidate (Michael Connors) - PDC complaint about those ads was filed but dismissed

COMPARISON: Similar PDC record to many others (complaint filed, dismissed). Active in state-level education policy through WSSDA.

RYAN BRAULT (Region 2 - Eastern Washington)

City: Pasco

Term: January 2022 - January 2026 (Second Term)

Replacement: Van Cummings (sworn in January 2026)

How Selected: Elected by school board members from Eastern Washington Region 2

Background: - Pasco School Board member since 2011 - Vice President (2014), President (2015) - Financial Advisor with Edward Jones (Limited Partner) - CFP® (Certified Financial Planner)

Education: - Bachelor's in Business Administration from Seattle Pacific University - Graduate of Leadership WSSDA and Leadership Tri-Cities (Class XV)

Professional Involvement: - Past President, Pasco Chamber of Commerce - Board member, Columbia Basin Badger Club - Member: Tri-Cities Chamber, Tri-Cities Sunrise Rotary (Paul Harris Fellow Award)

Education Advocacy: - PEAK (Partners in Educating All Kids) Partner since program inception - Pasco Vocational Building Committee (students build houses, profits fund scholarships) - Pasco Citizens for Better Schools (bond and levy campaigns)

Other Interests: - Anti-human trafficking work (10+ years with International Justice Mission) - Co-Founder: Faith Justice Network - Founding board member: Mirror Ministries (Tri-Cities trafficking issues)

Family: - Wife: Jamie - Two young children

Hobbies: - Wake-boarding, snowboarding, running, biking - Working toward private pilot's license

PDC Record: - No formal PDC complaints or violations found - School board service is typically elected but often unpaid/low-profile

COMPARISON: Business background brings financial expertise. Strong community involvement. Second term indicates effectiveness.

VAN CUMMINGS (Region 2 - Eastern Washington)

City: Richland

Term: January 2026 - January 2030 (First Term)

How Selected: Elected by school board members from Eastern Washington Region 2

Status: Officially joins Board January 12, 2026 (sworn in February 11 meeting)

Background: - 40-year career in public education - 13 years as classroom teacher (ELA middle and high school) - Nearly 20 years as principal and assistant principal across Eastern WA - Married to Anita for 52 years (met at Northwest Nazarene College)

Teaching Experience: - English Language Arts (4th-12th grades) - 7 years: Migrant Summer School (Othello School District) - Helped establish Air Force JROTC programs at two high schools

Administrative Experience: - Multiple high schools across Eastern Washington as principal/assistant principal - Director of Educational Talent Search (Lewis-Clark State College) - helped low-income and first-generation students pursue college - Director of School Improvement (Educational Service District 123) - K-12 Interim Principal, Inchelium School District (Colville Reservation) - Recent: Long-term substitute principal (Kennewick School District)

Education: - Master of Education from Central Washington University (1987) - Principal and Superintendent Certifications

Family: - Wife: Anita (52 years) - Two adult sons, their wives, four grandchildren

Personal: - Boating, camping, walking dog, cabin projects - Lifelong commitment to community service

Philosophy: - “School districts are best supported through strong local control” - “All students deserve access to a free and appropriate public education”

PDC Record: - No PDC complaints or violations found - Board member-elect, not yet sworn in

COMPARISON: Extensive hands-on experience at all levels. Rural/reservation experience brings unique perspective. Replaces Brault who served two terms.

MARY FERTAKIS, M.Ed. (Region 3 - Western Washington)

City: Tukwila

Term: January 2020 - January 2028 (Second Term)

Position: **CURRENT BOARD CHAIR**

How Selected: Elected by school board members from Western Washington Region 3

Background: - CEO, M Fertakis Consulting, LLC (P-12 educational equity, policy intersections) - Tukwila School Board: 22 years (district called “most ethnically diverse in United States”) - 2012 President of Washington State School Directors’ Association (WSSDA) - Consultant, National School Boards Association - Member, WSSDA Leadership Consultant Cadre

Education: - B.A. Political Science, University of Washington - B.A. International Studies, University of Washington - M.Ed. Education Policy, University of Washington - Executive Leadership Certification in P-3 Systems, University of Washington - ELL Teaching Certification, Seattle University - Certifications in Family Engagement and P-3 Systems, Harvard Graduate

School of Education

Major Leadership Roles: - Chair, State Board of Education - Chair, SBE Legislative Committee - Member, SBE Equity Committee - SBE Rep, WA State Social Emotional Learning Advisory Council - Founder, Tukwila Children's Foundation - Board member, Still Waters (McKinney-Vento children support)

International Experience: - U.S. Peace Corps - Senegal - Rural community development project manager - Built school in assigned village

WSSDA Leadership: - Closing the Achievement Gap Task Force - Urban Issues Committee - Diversity & Multicultural Action Team

Personal: - Mother of two young men - Two Golden Retrievers - "Die-hard Seahawks fan"

Expertise Areas: - Educational equity (specialty focus) - Intersection of education with: housing, transportation, workforce, health, human services - P-12 policy development - Diverse student population experience - School board training and development

PDC Record: - No formal PDC complaints or violations found - School board elections typically low-profile

COMPARISON: Longest continuous local school board service of any SBE member (22 years). Deep expertise in equity issues. Strong training/consulting background. Second term as state board member indicates effectiveness.

JEN CHONG JEWELL (Region 4 - Western Washington)

City: Not specified

Term: January 2025 - January 2029 (First Term)

How Selected: Elected by school board members from Western Washington Region 4

Background: - Parent and community advocate - Extensive background in public service and disability advocacy - Current: Transition Resource Coordinator for Snohomish County

Education: - Bachelor's: Secondary Education, Sociology, Social Studies (Grand Valley State University, 2003) - Master's: Counseling Psychology (Northwest University, 2007) - Leadership Certificate: Education in Neurodevelopmental and Related Disabilities (University of Washington)

Leadership Experience: - OSPI's Special Education Advisory Council (leadership role) - Board of Directors: Washington State Coalition for Language Access - Former: Washington State Rehabilitation Council (Division of Vocational Rehabilitation) - Former: City of Everett's Diversity Advisory Board - Former: Snohomish County's Developmental Disabilities Advisory Board - Former: Mukilteo Schools Foundation board

Current Role: - Transition Resource Coordinator, Snohomish County - Focus: Fostering

inclusive communities for individuals with developmental disabilities - Goal: Full life participation through community contributions

Advocacy Focus: - Special education and disability rights - Developmental disabilities services - Language access and translation - Transition services (school to adult life) - Inclusive community building

Philosophy: - “Every community wants to provide its young people with full and connected lives” - “K-12 education plays a pivotal role in fostering their achievements and futures”

PDC Record: - No PDC complaints or violations found - First-term board member, recently elected

COMPARISON: Brings disability advocacy expertise that’s unique on the board. Parent perspective. Strong special education focus relevant to Moses Lake and all districts.

DR. ANGELA GRIFFIN (Region 5 - Western Washington)

City: Seattle

Term: January 2022 - January 2026 (First Term)

Position: Executive Committee Member, At-Large

How Selected: Elected by school board members from Western Washington Region 5

Background: - 28+ years experience in youth program development (birth through young adulthood) - Visionary and inspirational leader - Former Federal Way School Board Vice President

Education: - Bachelor’s: Human Services (California State University) - Master’s: Education (California State University) - Doctorate: Educational and Organizational Leadership (Seattle University)

Professional Experience: - Transformational leader in multiple national organizations - Led WA-based nonprofit to increase foster care youth graduation rates statewide - Programs for children birth to age 12 for several national organizations

Federal Way School Board Accomplishments: - Instrumental in adopting Standards-Based Grading - Advocated for Academic Acceleration policies - Served on committees: - Social Studies Curriculum adoption - SEL (Social-Emotional Learning) Standards - Race and Equity Policy - Multiple levy passage campaigns

Expertise: - Building strong relationships and partnerships - Inspiring teams to action - Crafting strategies for equitable access - Youth development programming - Educational policy from parent advocate perspective

Family: - Wife, parent of three adult children and one teen - Grandmother of “adorable toddler” - All children benefited from Washington public education

Philosophy: - Passionate about ensuring “educational policies and practices create excellent experiences” - Focus on youth experiencing foster care - Equity and access for all students

PDC Record: - No PDC complaints or violations found - School board service record

COMPARISON: Doctorate in Educational Leadership gives academic credibility. Foster care focus is unique and important. Parent experience spans multiple generations. Federal Way board experience brings large district perspective.

4B. APPOINTED MEMBERS (Positions 3-7)

BILL KALLAPPA II (Position 3)

City: Tumwater

Term: January 2023 - January 2027 (Second Term)

Position: **PAST BOARD CHAIR**, Executive Committee Member

Appointed By: Governor Jay Inslee (2019)

Background: - Education Liaison for the Nisqually Tribe - 27+ years experience in public education, tribal youth programs, parks and recreation - Makah tribe member, grew up on Skokomish Reservation - Attended Shelton High School

Education: - Bachelor’s in Interdisciplinary Studies (The Evergreen State College)

Current Work: - Educational outreach to K-12 school districts - Outreach to higher education institutions - Promoting and sharing local tribal history and knowledge

Youth Leadership Accomplishments: - Established Nisqually Youth Council (governing youth body) - Imitates Tribal Council structure - Has resolution, constitution, bylaws - Elected officials and voting body - Gives voice to tribal youth - Co-founder: Inter Tribal League (ITL) - Established 2009 - Tribal youth sports league (grades 3-12) - Sports: basketball, softball, flag football, soccer - Partnered with Seattle Storm (6+ years) for annual youth basketball camp

Other Service: - Parks Commissioner, City of Tumwater - Member: Washington State Indian Education Association - Member: National Indian Education Association - Member: Tribal Leaders Congress for Education - Representative: Governor’s Office of Indian Affairs to Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee

Family: - Wife: Maia Bellon - Teenage daughter: Talia

Expertise: - Tribal education issues - Educational opportunity gap - Youth program development - Cross-cultural education - Tribal-state relations

PDC Record: - No PDC complaints or violations found - Appointed position, not elected

COMPARISON: Brings critical tribal perspective to state board. Extensive youth program experience. Past chair indicates leadership capacity and board respect. Only tribal member on current board.

BROOKE BROWN (Position 4)

City: Tacoma

Term: January 2022 - January 2026 (First Term)

Position: VICE-CHAIR, Executive Committee Member

Appointed By: Governor (specific governor not stated, likely Inslee)

Background: - **2021 Washington Teacher of the Year** - 15+ years teaching English Language Arts and Ethnic Studies - Washington High School (Franklin Pierce School District) - Current: Instructional Equity Specialist (Franklin Pierce School District)

Education: - Bachelor's: Sociology (University of Washington) - Bachelor's: History (University of Washington) - Bachelor's: American Ethnic Studies (University of Washington) - Master's: Education (Pacific Lutheran University) - Current: Doctoral student (PhD in Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment)

Teaching Philosophy: - "Learning is done best in community" - Centers student experiences - "Reminds them how much she learns from them too" - Educates whole child - Uses content to teach life lessons - Challenges students to improve their communities

Classroom Approach: - Creates "brave, inclusive environment" - Allows students to "show up authentically" - Centers student experiences - Encourages empathy and compassion

Legislative Advocacy: - Testified on SB 5462 (inclusive education) - Quote: "Inclusive education is not a political agenda or ideology, it's about recognizing the inherent worth and dignity of every individual"

Family: - Married to Eugene Brown (16 years, "best friend") - 4 children

Expertise: - Ethnic studies curriculum - Inclusive education - English language arts - Equity-focused instruction - Teacher perspective on policy

PDC Record: - No PDC complaints or violations found - Appointed position, not elected

COMPARISON: Active classroom teacher brings ground-level perspective. Teacher of the Year award indicates excellence. Ethnic studies expertise relevant to equity discussions. PhD pursuit shows academic commitment.

DR. SUSANA REYES (Position 5)

City: Shoreline

Term: January 2022 - January 2026 (First Full Term; filled unexpired term beginning March 2019)

Position: Executive Committee Member, At-Large

Appointed By: Governor Jay Inslee

Background: - First-generation college graduate - Born in Mexico City, Mexico - Began U.S. public school as 1st grader (Wapato School District) - Family worked in Yakima Valley fields - Graduated Wapato High School

Education: - Bachelor's: Elementary Education (Washington State University) - Master's: Educational Leadership (Washington State University) - Doctorate: Educational Leadership (Washington State University) - Principal Certification - Superintendent Certification

Current Position: - Superintendent of Shoreline Schools

Previous Superintendent/Administrative Experience: - Assistant Superintendent of Operations (Pasco School District) - Assistant Superintendent for Special Services (Mead School District - 4 years) - Assistant Superintendent (Pullman School District - 7 years, oversaw teaching and learning) - Principal, Assistant Principal (Wapato School District) - Elementary school teacher (Wapato School District)

Higher Education: - Adjunct Professor: WSU-Pullman and WSU-Spokane - Teaching: Undergraduate and graduate level courses - ESL Instructor: Yakima Valley Community College (several years during Wapato tenure)

Professional Leadership: - Past-President: Washington Educational Research Association (WERA) - Member: Washington Association of School Administrators (WASA) - Past Board Member: Washington Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development - Collaborator: Washington Association of Latino/a Administrators (WALA) - state affiliate of national ALAS

Previous State Service: - Citizen member: Washington Student Achievement Council (appointed by Inslee 2013, served until June 2019)

Family: - Husband: Lupe González (also immigrant from México, WSU graduate, Civil Engineer at Hanford)

Hobbies: - Running, movies, traveling, time with family

Expertise: - Migrant/agricultural family experience - First-generation college student perspective - Bilingual education - ESL/ELL instruction - Large district administration (Pasco, Shoreline) - Eastern Washington rural district experience

PDC Record: - No PDC complaints or violations found - Appointed position, not elected

COMPARISON: Immigrant success story brings critical perspective. Extensive superintendent experience (currently serving). Strong Latino/a education advocacy. Experience spans rural Eastern WA to urban Western WA. Personal background gives her unique insight into challenges facing immigrant students and families.

DR. PAUL PITRE (Position 6)

City: Not specified (WSU Everett campus)

Term: January 2023 - January 2027 (Second Full Term)

Appointed By: Governor (specific governor not stated)

Background: - Chancellor, Washington State University Everett campus (since September 2016)
- Academic Dean, WSU Everett (2011-2016) - Associate Professor: Educational Leadership and Counseling Psychology (WSU)

Education: - Bachelor's: Communication Studies (Western Washington University) - Master's: Higher Education Administration (New York University) - Doctorate: Education Policy and Leadership (University of Maryland)

Previous Experience: - Faculty member: Auburn University - Program Management Analyst: U.S. Department of Education - Public Affairs: Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce - Various administrative posts in higher education

Research Interests: - P-20 education policy - Leadership and governance in higher education - College access and choice

Expertise: - Higher education administration - P-20 alignment (preschool through graduate school) - Education policy analysis - Workforce development - STEM education access and equity - University-K12 partnerships

WSU Everett Context: - Branch campus serves working adults and non-traditional students - Focus on workforce-aligned programs - Partnerships with local school districts - Bridge between higher ed and K-12 systems

PDC Record: - No PDC complaints or violations found - Appointed position, not elected

COMPARISON: Brings higher education perspective critical for college-readiness discussions. P-20 alignment expertise helps connect K-12 to postsecondary. Research background provides data-driven approach. Second full term indicates effectiveness.

DR. DANA RILEY BLACK (Position 7)

City: Seattle

Term: January 2022 - January 2026 (First Term)

Appointed By: Governor (specific governor not stated)

Background: - Vice President of Education & Experiences, The Museum of Flight (since summer 2020) - Former: Assistant Superintendent for Everett Public Schools - Career focus: Partnerships across education systems and broader community

Education: - Bachelor of Science: Psychology (University of Washington) - Master's: Science Education (Miami University) - Doctorate (PhD): Educational Leadership and Curriculum

Studies (Miami University) - Grew up attending Federal Way Public Schools

Previous Leadership Roles: - Educational Specialist: Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics - Director: K-12 Institute for Science and Math Education (University of Washington) - Director: Center for Inquiry Science (Institute for Systems Biology) - Assistant Superintendent: Everett Public Schools

Current Museum of Flight Responsibilities: - Leads continuum of educational experiences - Programs spark excitement in STEM - High school and college credit-bearing programs - Connects K-12 to postsecondary pathways

Board Leadership: - Board Chair: Washington MESA (Math Engineering Science Achievement) - Member: Governor's STEM Education Innovation Alliance

Expertise: - STEM education - Informal learning environments - Museum-based education - K-12 to career pathways - Science and math instruction - Workforce alignment with education - Professional development for educators

Focus Areas: - Contemporary educational research, practices, policies - Workforce trends - Collaborative partnerships (business, labor, nonprofits) - Career-connected learning - Alignment to in-demand careers

Family: - Married to Benjamin Black - Two children - Lives in Seattle

PDC Record: - No PDC complaints or violations found - Appointed position, not elected

COMPARISON: STEM expertise is critical for modern workforce. Museum leadership brings innovative education perspective. UW and Everett background connects theory to practice. MESA board chair role demonstrates commitment to underserved students in STEM.

4C. PRIVATE SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE

JAN BROWN (Private Schools Representative)

City: Tacoma

Term: January 2020 - January 2028 (Second Term)

How Selected: Elected by private school directors

Background: - 40+ years in education (public and private schools) - Started in public schools teaching English/Language Arts (grades 4-12) - K-12 Music Endorsement - Transitioned to private Christian education

Education: - B.A.: Education, 4-12 English/Language Arts (Washington State University) - M.A.: Educational Leadership and Principal Certification - K-12 Music Endorsement

Teaching Experience: - Public schools: English/Language Arts teacher - Cascade Christian Schools: K-9 choral and general music instructor - Specialist working across grades to advance skills

Administrative Experience: - Elementary Principal - District Administration - K-12 Creative Arts Curriculum alignment specialist - Human Resource policies and procedures development - Led launch of north Tacoma Classical, Christian Elementary School (emphasis on Arts)

Higher Education: - Seattle Pacific University (SPU) Center for Professional Education (13 years) - Murdock Foundation grant work: - Worked with private school educators - Helped large and smaller private schools implement Professional Learning Communities

Expertise: - Private school operations and governance - Classical Christian education model - Arts-integrated curriculum - Professional development for private school educators - K-12 music education - Human resources in educational settings

PDC Record: - No PDC complaints or violations found - Private school representative election

COMPARISON: Brings private school perspective to state board. Experience in both public and private sectors. Arts and music emphasis is unique. Second term indicates effectiveness representing private school community.

4D. STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

RILEY ACHESON (Student Representative)

School: Cashmere High School (Cashmere School District)

Term: July 2025 - June 2027 (First Year, rising junior)

How Selected: Selected by Board in collaboration with Association of Washington Student Leaders

Background: - Rising junior at Cashmere High School - Active in DECA club - Member: National Honor Society - Coaches and choreographs for Cashmere's middle and high school drill teams

Community Involvement: - Active member of local church - Camp counselor: Camas Meadows Bible Camp (summers) - Considers camp "a second home"

Artistic Pursuits: - Published poet - Passionate artist - Regular participant in local art competitions - Painting and crafting - Performance arts

Motivation for Joining Board: - "Wanted to ensure that student voices are heard in decisions shaping Washington's education system" - Excited to advocate for system that "meets the needs, desires, and goals of all students"

Future Plans: - Hopes to attend Central Washington University - Goal: Become an educator

Geographic Representation: - Eastern Washington - Small town/rural perspective - Arts-focused student

PDC Record: - Not applicable (student, non-elected position)

COMPARISON: Arts and performance background brings creative perspective. Rural Eastern WA representation important. Future educator aspiration shows long-term commitment to education. Camp counselor experience demonstrates leadership.

ABBY WU (Student Representative)

School: Pullman High School (Pullman School District)

Term: July 2024 - June 2026 (Filled unexpired term September 2025, now senior)

How Selected: Selected by Board in collaboration with Association of Washington Student Leaders

Background: - Senior at Pullman High School - Competitive varsity swimmer - Running Start student (earning college credit)

Academic Interests: - Digital media and video production - Operates school's livestream and sports production programs - Enjoys English courses - Enjoys Political Science courses - "Critically engage with current events and societal movements"

Student Leadership: - Washington Youth Alliance Chapter Leader - Member: Association of Washington Student Leaders - "Vocal advocate for students across the state"

Personal Interests: - Reading - Exploring nature - Portrait photography

Future Plans: - College on East Coast - Career goal: Foreign Service Officer

Geographic Representation: - Eastern Washington - University town perspective (WSU community)

Philosophy: - Passionate about advocacy - Engaged in current events and political issues - Interest in international relations

PDC Record: - Not applicable (student, non-elected position)

COMPARISON: Running Start experience gives her dual high school/college perspective. Foreign Service aspiration shows global awareness. Media production skills bring technical literacy. Leadership roles demonstrate advocacy experience. Political Science interest relevant for policy board work.

4E. EX OFFICIO MEMBER

CHRIS REYKDAL (OSPI Superintendent)

Status: Ex Officio Member (voting on most issues)

Term: January 2017 - January 2029 (Third Term)

How Selected: Elected statewide (nonpartisan ballot)

See Separate Profile: Chris Reykdal has a complete 26-page profile document covering: - Background and career history - Grant County election results (rejected 67.58% to 31.97%) - PDC record (1 formal warning, February 2024) - Federal investigations (Title VI, Title IX, FERPA complaints pending) - Legislative record (2011-2017) - Funding sources (union backing despite “nonpartisan” label) - Positions on charter schools, vouchers, DEI programs - Power over Moses Lake schools

Key Points for SBE Context: - Has voting seat on SBE (some limitations) - Works with SBE on graduation requirements implementation - Collaborates on basic education compliance - SBE oversees some OSPI functions - Potential tension: Reykdal opposes charter school expansion, but SBE authorizes charter schools - No term limits as ex officio SBE member (but has election cycle as OSPI Superintendent)

5. 2026 LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM

Overview

The State Board of Education adopted its 2026 legislative platform on **October 16, 2025** in Tukwila. This represents a significant shift from previous years - moving from expansion and new programs to a **defensive posture** protecting existing investments.

Context: Budget Crisis

Washington faces projected budget shortfall of **\$12+ billion over four years**. The 2025-27 budget largely preserved K-12 funding and even increased special education funding, but many programs were cut or reduced.

Platform Philosophy

Quote from Yazmin Carretero (Government Relations & Policy Analyst): > “We’re looking at a framework that responds to the budget realities while also keeping student needs at the forefront.”

“We’re moving away from really just asking for a lot of new things and instead focusing on protecting the gains that we’ve made and the progress that we’ve made ... and just restoring a few things that we’ve lost.”

Randy Spaulding (Executive Director): > “Taking a thoughtful approach in investing in what works.”

Three Main Focus Areas

1. SAFEGUARDING RECENT PROGRESS - Prevent K-12 funding cuts that disproportionately affect underserved students - Uphold civil rights protections - Maintain inclusive curricula - Protect student mental health and well-being support programs - Maintain oversight and accountability systems

2. RESTORING CRITICAL RESOURCES - High School and Beyond Plan (HSBP): Support OSPI’s request to fund legislative mandate for universal online platform (currently unfunded mandate) - **Treehouse Graduation Success Program:** Reinstate funding for program helping foster care students stay on track to graduation (was cut) - **Alternative and nontraditional learning models:** Restore funding

3. PROTECTING FUTUREREADY PROCESS - FutureReady = comprehensive review of graduation requirements - Platform asks Legislature NOT to add new graduation requirements piecemeal - Instead: Support Board’s comprehensive strategic approach - Legislative proposal planned for 2027 session

Minimal Budget Requests

The Board approved only two small budget requests for itself: 1. New contract for small agency IT services 2. New administrator to handle increasing public records requests

Randy Spaulding note: “We are spending a lot of time and energy on this, and we don’t have dedicated staff” for public records.

What’s NOT in the Platform

Notably absent compared to previous years: - No requests for major new programs - No significant funding increases - No expansion of existing initiatives - No new mandates on districts

Political Realities

This is one of the most modest legislative platforms in recent SBE history. It reflects: - Republican control of state Senate - Narrow Democratic majority in House - Governor Ferguson’s \$9 billion tax package controversy - Public pushback on spending - Budget constraints at state level

Implementation

The Legislative Committee will use this platform to: - Guide advocacy during 2026 session - Prioritize efforts on defensive goals - Coordinate with OSPI, Governor, legislators - Track relevant bills - Testify at hearings when needed

6. PDC RECORDS & CONTROVERSIES

Summary of Findings

CLEAN RECORDS: The vast majority of State Board members have no PDC violations or formal complaints.

ONE DISMISSED CASE: Ron Mabry (Region 1) was named in a PDC complaint that was **dismissed with no violation found.**

Ron Mabry - Kennewick School Board Case (2019)

Case Number: 48006, 48008, 48009, 48010 (multiple board members named)

Date: March 2019

Status: DISMISSED - No violation found

Allegation: Kennewick School District No. 17 Board of Directors (including Ron Mabry) allegedly violated RCW 42.17A.555 by: - Failing to provide proper notice of a meeting topic related to Proposition 1 (bond measure) - Failing to allow public to express opposing views - January 9, 2019 Board Meeting

What Happened: 1. Board approved motion to send letter to newspaper supporting Proposition 1 2. Board later rescinded the motion 3. Complaint filed alleging improper process

PDC Finding: “The Respondent’s January 9, 2019 approved motions to move, adopt, and later rescind a suggestion to send a letter to the newspaper supporting Prop. 1 does not amount to an actual violation warranting further investigation.”

Outcome: - No fines - No penalties - PDC reminded board of proper procedures - Case dismissed per RCW 42.17A.755(1)

Context: School boards are prohibited from using public facilities to promote or oppose ballot measures. However, because the motion was rescinded and no letter was actually sent, PDC found no violation occurred.

Political Characterization (2023)

Ron Mabry was described as a “known liberal school board member” in campaign materials by

We Want Accountability PAC during 2023 Kennewick School Board elections. Materials claimed opposing candidate Michael Connors “Voted with Liberals 100%” based on voting alignment with Mabry.

PDC Response: - Complaint filed about the campaign materials (false advertising claim) - PDC reviewed and found claims were political opinion/characterization, not clear false statements of fact - Complaint dismissed - This was about campaign materials ABOUT Mabry, not BY Mabry

Governor-Appointed Members

No PDC Issues: All seven governor-appointed positions (currently 5 active members) have no PDC records. This is expected because: - They didn’t run campaigns to be appointed - Appointments don’t require campaign finance reporting - They serve at Governor’s discretion

Student Representatives

Not Applicable: Student representatives don’t have PDC records because: - They’re selected, not elected - No campaign finance involved - They’re minors (typically)

Private School Representative

Jan Brown - No PDC Records Found: Private school representative elections are typically low-profile with minimal campaign activity, so PDC filings are uncommon.

7. COMPARISON & CONTEXT

Power Comparison

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION vs. OTHER ENTITIES:

More Power Than: - Individual legislators (SBE sets graduation requirements; Legislature only passes laws) - OSPI in some areas (SBE sets policy; OSPI implements) - Local districts on graduation requirements (districts can add but not subtract)

Less Power Than: - Full Legislature (can’t pass laws, only implement them) - Governor (can’t veto, appoint broadly, or control budget) - Washington Supreme Court (can’t override constitutional rulings)

Equal/Shared Power With: - OSPI on implementation (collaborative relationship) - Legislature on education policy (SBE proposes, Legislature decides)

Unique Position

The State Board occupies a **middle tier** of education governance:

TOP TIER (Makes Laws): - Legislature - Governor (signs/vetoes) - Voters (initiatives)

MIDDLE TIER (Implements Laws): - **State Board of Education** ← Sets graduation requirements, oversees charter authorizers - OSPI (administers programs, distributes funding) - State Supreme Court (interprets laws when challenged)

BOTTOM TIER (Operates Schools): - Local School Boards - District Superintendents - Principals and Teachers

Public Visibility Problem

PARADOX: The State Board has significant power over Moses Lake schools but receives minimal public attention.

Why This Matters: 1. **Graduation Requirements:** SBE decides what classes Moses Lake students must take to graduate - more immediate impact than most legislation 2. **Charter School Authority:** SBE controls whether new charter schools can even exist 3. **Implementation Rules:** SBE writes the detailed regulations that districts must follow 4. **Waiver Authority:** SBE can grant exceptions to rules, affecting individual students

Yet voters know: - Almost nothing about SBE members - How members are selected - What SBE actually does - Current SBE priorities or positions

Contrast with Legislature: - Legislators campaign publicly - Media covers legislative debates - Votes are recorded and publicized - Constituents can contact representatives - Election races are competitive

SBE operates with far less scrutiny despite controlling day-to-day educational requirements.

Moses Lake Specific Context

How Does SBE Affect Moses Lake?

Direct Impact: 1. **Graduation Requirements** - Every Moses Lake High School student must meet SBE's 24-credit requirement and pathway options 2. **Waiver Requests** - If Moses Lake School District needs flexibility, they must ask SBE 3. **Charter Schools** - If a group wanted to start charter school in Moses Lake, SBE would be involved in authorization process 4. **Alternative Programs** - SBE rules govern alternative education options available

Indirect Impact: 1. **Legislative Advocacy** - SBE's 2026 platform influences what education bills pass 2. **OSPI Oversight** - SBE has some authority over Chris Reykdal's office 3. **Statewide Standards** - SBE decisions affect all districts equally

Eastern Washington Representation

Current EW Members (3 of 16): - Ron Mabry (Kennewick) - Elected, Region 1 - Van Cummings (Richland) - Elected, Region 2 (joining January 2026) - Riley Acheson (Cashmere) - Student Representative

Former/Outgoing: - Ryan Brault (Pasco) - Term ending January 2026

Geographic Balance: - Eastern WA: 2 elected seats (out of 5 regional elected seats) - Western WA: 3 elected seats (out of 5 regional elected seats) - Student seats rotate between regions (currently one EW, one WW) - Governor appointees: No geographic requirement (but “diversity” consideration)

Grant County Perspective: Grant County voters **rejected Chris Reykdal** by 36 points (67.58% to 31.97%) in November 2024, yet he sits on the State Board of Education that sets graduation requirements for Moses Lake students.

However, the three **elected Eastern Washington members** of SBE (Mabry, Cummings, Acheson) provide regional representation that’s more aligned with Eastern Washington values than statewide elected officials like Reykdal.

Accountability Gap

Legislature: - Elected every 2 years - Campaign finance disclosure required - Public voting records - Constituent contact expected - Media coverage - Opposition research and competition

SBE: - Most members serve 4-year terms - Selection process is opaque (school boards elect members) - Meetings are open but rarely covered - Limited public awareness - No traditional campaign process for most members - Difficult to “vote out” members voters disagree with

This creates significant accountability gap for an entity with real power over education policy.

CONCLUSION

Key Takeaways for Moses Lake Residents

1. **Real Power:** The State Board of Education has direct authority over what Moses Lake students must do to graduate. This is not symbolic - it’s operational power.
2. **Limited Public Input:** Unlike legislators who campaign and can be voted out, most SBE members are either appointed or elected by other school board members (not the public).
3. **Quality Members:** The current board includes experienced educators, administrators, and advocates with genuine expertise. Most have clean PDC records.
4. **Budget Constraints:** The 2026 legislative platform is extremely modest - focused on

protecting existing programs rather than expansion.

5. **Geographic Representation:** Eastern Washington has 2 of 5 elected regional seats, which is proportional but means Western Washington dominates numerically.
6. **Charter School Divide:** SBE has authority over charter schools, but superintendent (Reykdal) on the board opposes charter expansion - creates internal tension.
7. **Student Voice:** Two high school students serve as VOTING members, which is unique and gives youth direct input.
8. **Expertise Matters:** Current board brings diverse expertise - tribal education, special education, STEM, ethnic studies, higher education alignment, teacher perspective, superintendent experience.
9. **Transparency Issue:** Despite significant power, SBE operates with far less public scrutiny than Legislature or Governor.
10. **FutureReady Coming:** Major graduation requirements review is underway, with legislative proposal expected 2027. This will directly affect Moses Lake students entering high school in coming years.

Questions for Moses Lake Voters to Consider

1. Should voters have more direct say in who serves on State Board of Education?
 2. Is the current selection process (appointed + elected by school boards) producing good results?
 3. Should there be term limits for appointed members similar to elected members?
 4. How can public awareness of SBE's work be improved?
 5. Does Eastern Washington have adequate representation on a board where Western Washington dominates numerically?
 6. Should OSPI Superintendent have a vote on SBE given potential conflicts (e.g., charter schools)?
 7. Is a 16-member board too large to be effective?
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SOURCES & VERIFICATION

All information in this profile comes from: - Washington State Board of Education official website (sbe.wa.gov) - Washington PDC official records (pdc.wa.gov) - Washington State Legislature RCW and WAC codes - News articles from Washington State Standard, local papers - Association of Washington Student Leaders - Board meeting minutes and documents

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END OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION PROFILE

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This document is part of the Moses Lake School District transparency project. For other profiles see: Education Committee Members, Supreme Court Gateway, Governor Bob Ferguson, OSPI Superintendent Chris Reykdal.