

**WSPTA Quarterly BOD Report
for April 2008**

A Focus Day 2008 Recap

Byron Shutz, Focus Day Chair 2007-08

Focus Day '08 was hosted Feb. 13 in the Legislative Building on the Olympia Capital Campus. Focus Day is WSPTA's only advocacy-only event, a public companion to Legislative Assembly.

This is a preliminary report – a final accounting, complete with detailed recommendations on changes or additions to the committee's process and task, will accompany the documentation and material assembled in a binder and onto a CD to forward to next year's program Chair (best intention is to have such completed ASAP likely by June).

OVERVIEW

All-in-all, with the assistance of staff and accommodations by attendees, it was a successful undertaking and a very good day. Future events could be improved by building further upon some components of this year, many of which had evolved from previous years' successes. A purposeful, cumulative affect would provide additional gains in the future success of the event.

Though there were definite shortcomings in this year's marketing and fulfillment of the event, large strides were made in creating and establishing an infrastructure around the development of planning, execution, and supporting materials. Further refinements to the implementation of the event could improve attendee experiences, and the legislator's relationship to WSPTA.

The general focus of this year's event was the work of the Basic Education Finance Task Force (in the process of redefining Basic Education and its funding formulas; several members of the Task Force provided updates, including Rep. Hunter, Rep. Priest, Sen. Tom and Sen. McDermott). The work of the BEF Task Force will be complete (hopefully) in December 2008, and it will be the start of the new biennium for budget purposes – it is anticipated that there will be crucially important education bills ready for WSPTA to work on in the 2009 session.

OUTLINE OF FOCUS DAY LEADERSHIP & CONTRIBUTORS

A summary estimate of volunteer hours will accompany the final report.

Chair: Byron Shutz

Board: Paul Cheek
Laura Bay

Leg. Comm: RLCs, all, to various degree, commitment and effect (some previous RLCs too)

Staff: Kim Howard
Owen Atkins
Donna Christensen (initiated & performed all the scheduling with officials)
Fred Dyer (sticker production; event planning and materials)
Unidentified staff performing countless behind-the-scenes activities

Contributors: Ex-officio advisor Pat Montgomery
Ex-officio counsel Kelly Munn
Martha Rice – data for school & legislative Districts, legislators
Barb Billinghamurst – counsel and input
Others well deserving yet at the moment mistakenly & regrettably unlisted

Committee: None (duties for additional member(s) to be developed for next year?)

OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS GOING FORWARD

More suggestions and details will be provided in the final report. Also, a Zoomerang survey was performed by staff to solicit feedback on the event (the FD Chair promoted it via the listserves). Survey responses were generally favorable, and generally echoed a consensus of the more casual feedback.

Some preliminary conclusions from all sources include:

Specific suggestions

- Better integrate and associate the one-day event into the year-round advocacy activities and efforts, and highlight the correlation, role and opportunity of Focus Day.
- Focus the event's orientation around public and media exposure to which entities (members, legislators, allies, etc) can align and gain exposure.
- Invest more resources in marketing the function and event, and in follow-up afterwards.
- Better utilize the web and WSPTA website
- Re-explore options for and consequences to having attendees register in advance
- Further develop the event as a "media and rally" format. Ramp up the internal membership and external public exposure – highlight WSPTA's capability, fulfill advocacy intent.
- The Columbia Room was a positive characteristic –centrally located, easy access for all participants, a fitting ambience, flexible use, all-in-one room. Every effort should be made to repeat; even go so far as to schedule the event around its availability (within reason).
- The esteemed speakers coming to us seemed, for many attendees, imminently more approachable and productive.
- *Critical* - prepare well for the BEF-TF activity in the 2009 Legislative Session, and prior.
- Re-evaluate the Legislator Reception (in the Columbia Room) – significantly improve the invite process and event structure, or rethink its value.
- Spontaneous emceeing was fantastic, but better prep and anticipation could improve the audience participation, and the inevitable adjustments in scheduling. The Chair failed to anticipate the highlighted role of the emcee in the one-room-all-day venue, or adequately prepare for its consequences.

General considerations:

- The decision to meet individually with legislators, independent of the feasibility of actually scheduling with them given the day's agenda, generally reflects the quantity and quality of legislative advocacy throughout the year by a particular Region. A greater degree of consistent advocacy interaction imparted less importance to this annual event as being a one-on-one affair -- more active Regions generally voiced a more collective-oriented objective to hear from legislators rather than to talk at legislators.
- The details of hosting an event well do still count – remains to be an elusive balance between helping attendees feel more intrinsically participatory versus unconsciously restricting them to be passive attendees'. Investing in providing more "hand-holding" and "inclusive communication" in activities is worth pursuing – in a word, more forum-type activities.
- Develop duties and tasks for developing additional FD Committee members – the activity and event could likely benefit from additional support to a Chair – TBD (particularly on the day-of).

RECAP OF PREPERATIONS FOLLOWING SELECTION OF THE CHAIR

The emphasis this year evolved into a focus on creating and building the mechanics of an Focus Day event infrastructure – time and efforts were diverted toward exploring and articulating the potential objectives, documenting probable job description variables and project management planning, creating resources and tools for the program and members, and establishing potential protocols, procedures and precedents.

Practices and Procedures, and Potential Precedents:

- Regional LCs/Dirs scheduled the legislator appointments (or employed others to do so); established assignments of Legislative Districts to Regions.
- Initiated a “chain-mail” approach to distributing email communications and resources from FD Chair down through the WSPTA regional hierarchy (RD-RLC-Council-CLC-Unit P/LC).
- Provided more background info, helpful tips and guidance to every attendee – attempted to raise awareness, comfort levels, active participation, and connections.
- The Columbia Room in the basement of the Leg./Capital Dome was reserved all day.
- The Governor (Gregoire) spoke to/with us.
- The Minority Leader of Ed & Appropriation Comms (Rep. Priest) spoke to/with us.
- A significant & timely legislative committee (Basic Ed Finance Task Force) spoke to/with us.
- Hosted a Legislator Reception in the Columbia Room, with minimal food & drink for them.
- Members encouraged to attend more legislator meetings, not just their own District.
- AA Emails, Zoomerang Surveys, and fortune-cookie leave-behinds were (to be) delivered to legislators by attendees.

External Public Resource Files and Tools Developed:

- *FD 2008 - Focus Day Agenda Doc*
- *FD 2008 - WSPTA Focus Day Flyer-Poster Doc*
- *FD 2008 - Legislator Reception Invite Doc*
- *FD 2008 – FD Chair Letter of Intro & Event Overview*
- *FD 2008 - Focus Day Planning Tips Doc*
- *FD 2008 - Virtual Participation CapWiz Tip Sheet Doc*
- *FD 2008 - Sample Article on Alternate Participation - Action Alerts Doc*
- *FD 2008 - School Districts per Legislative District - PTA Region Spreadsheet*
- *FD 2008 - WA School-Ds per Region and Leg-D 2007-08 Spreadsheet*
- *FD 2008 - WA Legislator Contact Appointment List 2007-08 Spreadsheet*
- *FD 2008 - WSPTA Legislative Issues Post-LA 2007-08 Doc*
- *FD 2008 - Sample Newsletter Article – Are-you-ready Doc*
- *FD 2008 - Hotels in Olympia Doc*
- *WA Olympia Capital Campus Map 2008-01.pdf* (on the WA Gov website)
- *WSPTA 2007-08 Advocacy & Legislation Handbook.pdf* (on the WSPTA Leg. website)

Internal-Admin. Resource Files and Tools Developed:

- *FD 2008 - WA Legislator Contact Master Database 2007-08 v3.2 Spreadsheet*
- *FD 2008 – Instructions to Making Appts w Legislators Info Doc DRAFT*
- *FD 2008 – Email & Web Communications Schedule 2007-08 Spreadsheet*
- *FD 2008 - Legislator Contact FD Report Form Doc*
- *FD 2008 – FD Packet Contents History Record 2004-08 Spreadsheet*

STILL TO BE COMPLETED FOR 2008 FD PROGRAM

The Chair is in-process of drafting a final report, complete with detailed recommendations on most aspects of the event, plus changes or additions/subtractions, and a project management schedule of all potential activities and deadlines for which a Chair may elect. A binder has been assembled of all the documentation, data, materials, plus a CD of all such files will be produced to forward to next year’s Chair & program.

RECAP OF EVENT

Final Agenda: *plus notes in italic parentheses on approx. actual deviation from the schedule*

- Location of All Events = Columbia Room, ground floor of Leg. Bldg. (Capital Dome)

(Setup began 7:00AM by Staff & Chair)

- 8:30** *(on time)* Check-In Registration
- 9:00** *(9:10)* Welcome – *Laura Bay, WSPTA President*
- 9:10** to 9:30 *(9:10 to 9:45)*
- Overview of Focus Day - *Paul Cheek, WSPTA Leg. Dir.*
Top 5 WSPTA Priority Issues - *Paul Cheek, WSPTA Leg. Dir.*
Bill & Committee Status - *Donna Christensen, WSPTA Lobbyist*
- 10:30** *(10:35)* Guest Speaker: *Governor Christine Gregoire*
- 11:00** *(on time)* Open Forum with Basic Ed Finance Task Force Members
(R. Hunter, R. Tom, P. Sullivan, S.T. Santos, J. McDermott)
- 11:45** Guest Speaker: *Adie Simmons, Dir. Gov. Office Ed Ombudsman*
- 12:00** Guest Speaker: *Representative Skip Priest*
- 12:30 to 1:30** Legislator Reception *(refreshments for guests)*
- 2:00* *Conclude access to the Columbia Room – vacate, take belongings*
- 1:45 to 2:15** Region 2 Legislators Panel Discussion
(R. Hunter, G. Anderson, J. Rodney)
Location: Hearing Room A in the O'Brien Building
- 2:45 (sched.as 5:00)* Conclude Event

Attendance: As of 03/06/08 from Fred Dyer -

- 264 people signed in -- of those signed-in and had designated a WSPTA Region:

125 as Reg. 2 (47%)
58 as Reg. 6 (22%)
25 as Reg. 5 (09%)
22 as Reg. 9 (08%)
9 as Reg. 10 (03%)
9 as Reg. 7 (03%)
6 as Reg. 3 (02%)
5 as Reg. 1 (02%)
4 as Reg. 4 (02%)
1 as Reg. 12 (-- %)
0 as Reg. 8
0 as Reg. 11
0 as Reg. 15

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264

* There is not a Region 13 or 14.

- **169** of those provided legible email addresses