

CELEBRATING A HISTORY OF LEADERSHIP EDUCATION

In many ways I believe that Washington principals were pioneers in student leadership development.

In the summer of 1954, two advisers and four students from Seattle Public Schools attended a leadership camp at Camp Cheley in Estes Park, Colorado. Their newly gained knowledge and enthusiasm led to a Seattle-sponsored leadership camp in 1955.

Principals in Washington were quick to realize that the skills taught and the networks created would benefit all schools. They started with the fundamental belief that student leaders could be strong partners in creating schools that foster inclusion and success for all. With that foundation, the first principal-sponsored leadership camp in Washington was held in the summer of 1956.

As this new edition of *Building Leaders for Life* is released we are celebrating our 60th year of principal-sponsored, student-focused leadership development in Washington. Over these 60 years, we have grown from one summer camp serving 100 high school elected officers to multiple programs that serve over 12,000 formal and informal students leaders each year. From elementary school programs that teach inclusion and positive leadership on the playground to middle and high school programs that promote authentic student voice and opportunities for all, our growth reflects a constant look at the current issues facing schools.

In the early 1980s, leadership classes were beginning to take hold in Washington. These classes were becoming an important place to teach student leaders not only the skills of leadership, but the attitudes required of leaders: compassion, empathy and a commitment to serve. In many cases those

who taught leadership at that time relied on curriculum drawn from our leadership camps.

In the fall of 1991 the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP) made an even stronger commitment to student leadership by creating a full-time position to build and support leadership development in schools. An early needs assessment suggested that a guidebook for teaching leadership would be a huge asset. In February of 1992 we gathered an amazing group of veteran and novice leadership class teachers to compile their best leadership lessons together as the first edition of *Building Leaders for Life*. This revised edition includes updates to previous lessons that have stood the test of time as well as many new lessons that reflect our continued push for relevant ways to teach leadership concepts to high school students.

The original writing team of 1992 included Paul Christianson, Marty Fortin, Bob Gallagher, Pat Geiger, Bobbie Jo Gregor, Mark Gwaltney, David Hayashi, Paul Highsmith, Mark Kerr, Eleanor Ledbetter, Art Mabbott, Gale Newell, Kathy Parker, David Tadlock, Lois Trapp, Darrel White, and Shannon Wiggs. Many of their lessons remain fundamentally the same, with only cosmetic changes: we updated chalkboards to white boards and changed VCRs to streaming, but the lessons are still strong. When it comes to the basics of communication, group process, leadership skills, self-awareness and human relations the truth is that the leadership lessons of old are still leadership lessons we need to teach today.

Many of the new lessons have grown through the Association of Washington Student Leaders' (AWSL) dedication to designing relevant leadership curriculum as changing technology and social norms alter

how we interact with others in our schools and communities. That task has largely been undertaken by Joe Fenbert, a curriculum specialist for AWSL since 1993. His ability to study, create and craft solid lessons is masterful and his work is seen throughout this publication. Other contributors who have helped shape the updates to this guide include Jesse Bartlett, Kari Bradley, Leanne Donley, Johnny Herber, Alyssa St. Hillaire, Rebecca Latham, John Norlin, Vincent Perez, Johanna Phillips, Vince Ivelia and Bryan Zager. All are successful leadership teachers who continue to inspire and guide student leaders.

This remake has been on the docket for years. To make it work we needed a dedicated group to commit to the process no matter how many “other duties as assigned” got in the way. Original contributors Bobbie Jo Gregor and Shannon Wiggs gave hours in their retirement to start the process of cleaning up former lessons. With the addition of Van Anderson to our team in May of 2015, the editing skills and attention to detail have allowed us to complete this project. Karen Johnson and Ashlie Gates have also been integral members of the support team who have made this publication possible.

The final step in the creation of this updated guide was undertaken by Barb Goll, of Barb Goll Graphic Design. As a former Leadership Class teacher and Activity Coordinator, she skillfully applied her design talents through the lens of a teacher, giving us a fresh look for this publication that enabled us to effectively convey the components of each lesson.

It would be impossible to comprehensively credit everyone who has contributed to this effort. Leadership class curriculum comes from so many sources – a conversation between colleagues inspired by watching a video clip, a lesson sparked by a student conversation about practical steps to stand up against bullying behaviors or a simple

question asked in a seminar can all be seeds that blossom into an entire lesson. In Washington we are blessed to have hundreds of teachers who are truly students of leadership, who hone their craft as part of staff each summer at AWSL Leadership Camps, serve as facilitators for our programs and present workshops at conferences around the state. They are principals, teachers and support personnel, and their unique contributions to this publication are innumerable.

When AWSP’s vision for growing the student leadership program became a reality in the fall of 1991, I was the lucky one. In a leap of faith, Marty and I moved to the Cispus Learning Center and started to build programs, opportunities, curriculum, staff – all focused on strengthening schools through empowered, engaged students. Over the past 25 years my leadership growth has been impacted by countless students and educators. Special thanks to Marty – my best friend, husband, colleague and co-creator. I appreciate the way you continue to dream big and help me to do the same. Special thanks to former AWSP Executive Director Brian Barker and current Executive Director Gary Kipp who have continued to be strong advocates for our programs. I admire their leadership and appreciate their support and vision. Also, special thanks to Sandy Stonebreaker, my leadership mentor and friend, who continues to guide my work through her patient listening and nuggets of wisdom.

Finally, thanks to all of you who are using this guide. As you support and challenge your students while teaching the concepts presented here, you are truly building leaders for life!

Susan Fortin, Director
Association of Washington Student Leaders