

## WashingtonPrincipal

**Managing Editor**, David Morrill • david@awsp.org  
**Printing**, Sundance Press • www.sundancepress.com  
**Design**, Scott Hamilton Design • www.scotthamiltondesign.com

*Washington Principal* is the official publication of the Association of Washington School Principals (AWSP). It is published in the fall, winter and spring each school year. Advertising inquiries should be addressed to the AWSP Olympia office. All articles published become the property of AWSP and may not be reprinted without permission.



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# Students Lead the Way

**David Morrill**

*Communications Director*

**As we go to press** with this edition of *Washington Principal*, a national day of protest against gun violence dominates the headlines. The student survivors of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High attack were the force behind the “March for Our Lives” event on March 24. AWSP and AWSL have advocated for decades to increase the power of student voice and focus on developing the leadership skills students need to address real-world challenges, just like the leadership the students behind the “March for Our Lives” campaign displayed.

The sad reality is, school shootings are an all-too common part of our society. If you’re looking for a school safety article, we don’t offer one in this issue (although you might want to check out the last issue for an article from Sandy Hook Promise). However, many articles in this edition touch on topics supporting safe schools. While guns are a big part of the discussion right now, many students experience trauma in other ways, directly impacting their ability to learn.

For all the prosperity in our state, our mental health programs haven’t been adequately funded. In this issue, you’ll find articles addressing mental health: one on adult teen homelessness, and our cover story features a school taking trauma head-on. Relationships, mental health, student voice and belonging — all those things matter as much or more than any security protocol.

On a much lighter note, spring transitions are here. We’re remodeling our downstairs to increase the size of our video studio and bring you some more great new content. Rick Stacy, who has served as our financial services and IT coordinator for over 25 years, retires at the end of April. His replacement, Alli Jorgenson, is training with him right now. Starting July 1, we’ll have a permanent, full-time director based out of eastern Washington to better support the east side of the state. We’re also preparing for our biggest transition as Gary Kipp prepares to hand the reigns over to Scott Seaman at the end of June.

I’ll wrap up with some wise words from Gary, who typically ends our Monday morning meetings with a phrase we all need to keep in mind, “Let’s be safe out there.” ■



*David Morrill is the AWSP Communications Director. He serves as Managing Editor for Washington Principal.*