

Calendar U

Children's Eye Health and Safety Month

Aug 26: Women's Equality Day

Aug 28: Rainbow Bridge Remembrance Day (honoring and remembering pets who have passed away)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT RECOGNITIONS:

• Krishna Janmashtami begins (Hindu holiday)

IMPORTANT SCHOOL/DISTRICT DATES:

Pro Learning & Resources

AWSP Learning Lab

Whether in person or online, on-demand or in real-time, we've got something just for you. Because one size doesn't fit all, we offer fun, engaging professional learning for every stage of your career. We believe learning happens when you access expertise inside and outside of the group, participate in authentic activities within the group, practice using relevant problems of practice, engage with colleagues (formerly and informally), apply new learning to professional contexts, and reflect on your leadership and new learnings. The AWSP Learning Lab is your one-stop shop for your professional learning needs. We've got webinars, forums, in-person events, on-demand courses, and virtual workshops, along with all the tools and resources to support them. Visit learn.awsp.org to find out more.

AWSP Legal Services

All AWSP active members are eligible for free professional advice from AWSP executive staff on employment-related issues. Our seasoned staff can help you navigate a thorny issue or offer a helpful second opinion. Our services are always confidential and respectful of all parties involved. Call the AWSP office at 800.562.6100 to arrange for an initial consultation. An AWSP staff member will respond promptly and confidentially. Remember, it's never too early to contact us. Early counsel can not only save time and money; it might also save your career.

AWSP's Principal Matters e-Newsletter

If it affects the principalship in Washington state, you'll hear about it in our bi-weekly *Principal Matters* e-newsletter. Topics cover leadership, research, administration, operations, ASB issues, outdoor education, student activities, principal evaluation and best practices from across the state. Watch for this newsletter on the second and fourth Mondays each month between August and June.

AWSP's Launching School Leadership Series

If you or someone you know is in year one, year two, or newly assigned, this three-part, in-person series is for you! Gain the tools, support, and confidence you need to lead with purpose—right from day one. Connect with a statewide network of peers and mentors to build momentum, grow your leadership, and strengthen your school community. Learn more and register at www.awsp.org/LSL.



Work with the office team for yearly planning.

Leadership Actions

	Write a "welcome back" newsletter.
	Establish a theme for the year.
	Communicate back-to-school events and news through website and social media.
	Plan positive behavior rewards for the year.
	Plan an event to meet new staff.
	Organize new employee orientation.
	Review/develop alternative schedules (i.e., half day, early/late release).
	Review code of conduct and discipline plan with all community members.
	Work with support staff to anticipate and welcome students who might struggle with the transition back to school.
	Hold parent/family meetings with students with attendance/behavior concerns to establish a solid working relationship up front.
	Schedule safety drills.
	Communicate updated health protocols.
	Register for AWSP's Launching School Leadership Series for school leaders in year one, year two, or newly assigned. (See August Pro Learning and Resources.)
St	udent Leadership
	Join or renew your AWSL Membership.
	Connect with AWSL if you are/have a new advisor in your building.
	Purchase AWSL curriculum and resources.
	Register for ASB finance workshops for advisors, administrators, bookkeepers, and students.
	Register for AWSL's Equity and Awareness Training for school teams.
	Book AWSL's Reimagining Recess programs for your elementary school.
	Book a beginning of the year retreat at Cispus.
	Adults: Register for the National Conference on Student Activities.

Culture

Building Relationships Challenge



Plan a parent/guardian meeting for those who will be new to the school along with the parents of the students transitioning in. Include communication between school/home, code of conduct, athletics, and parent involvement opportunities.

Leave a note and a small gift (piece of candy, fun school supply item, t-shirt, etc.) in the staff mailboxes on the first day. The note can be a preprinted cardstock bookmark with a welcome message and key reminders.

Greet families and students as they arrive. Make sure school counselors provide buddies/student mentors to new students.

For your first staffulty meeting of the year, break the ice with a photo sharing game. Ask each individual to pull out their phone and select one of their favorite photos from the summer. Then, tell them to find someone they don't know well in the room and share the photo and explain why it's their favorite. After 3-5 minutes, have them find a new partner and share, and so forth. If someone doesn't have a phone picture, they can simply provide a verbal description of their favorite summer moment and why.

Belonging Challenge

Review data on all the various diverse cultures that exist within your learning organizations (staff and students). How do you acknowledge and celebrate their cultural backgrounds (holidays, etc.)?

Student Centeredness

- Conduct/oversee new student orientation.
- Conduct opening day student assembly to reaffirm expectations, vision, etc.
- Prepare and distribute student accommodations (IEPs, 504, etc.) as well as allergy and medication lists for teachers and other appropriate staff.
- Schedule hearing and vision screenings.

Traditions/Celebrations

 Plan assemblies and special events (i.e., Homecoming, dances, etc.).

Secondary: Encourage students to join the AWSL Student Voice Network.

Systems

Vision/Mission

- Prepare school opening inspirational remarks for staff.
 Be prepared to reaffirm the shared vision for the school.
- With school improvement team, finalize school improvement goals and objectives and improvement plans for the school year based on state student achievement data from the previous school year.

Communication

- Send letters to students with schedules for opening day.
- Using multiple means (registration materials, social media outlets, local newspaper, community agencies, etc.), share information about free and reduced breakfast and lunch programs and encourage all that are eligible to participate.
- Send a parent/guardian letter, email, social media, or website message the first week with a welcome and any important dates/reminders for the first week of school. Emphasize immunization exclusion information. Include a personal invitation to the school's Open House.
- Review school website to ensure annual calendar and staff information is current.
- Post laminated directional signs in hallways and classrooms to help students find their classrooms.
 Ensure important information is posted in classrooms and around the school. For example, opening day bell schedule.
- Prepare announcements that need to be made to open the day. Provide reminders for staff regarding forms that may need to be distributed and collected from the students.
- · Prepare opening remarks for first day assembly.
- Develop staff group text, email, and/or emergency telephone list (staff only).
- Post all programs, performances, meetings, and athletic events on the district calendar.
- Ensure that all parents/guardians and students receive the student handbook.
- Distribute staffulty handbooks to appropriate staffulty members and collect acknowledgment of receipt forms. Review key provisions with appropriate staffulty members.
- Conduct Open House/Back-to-School Night.
- Meet with key school committees, coaches, and team members to finalize plans for the upcoming school year.
- Working with sponsors/coaches, meet with fall extracurricular participants and parents/guardians to review rules and code of conduct.
- Create "Who is in charge when the principal is out of the building" list and distribute to staffulty.

Collaborative Leadership

- Working with leadership team, prepare for Open House/Back-to-School Night.
- Working with appropriate individuals, prepare for fall field trips. Obtain School Board approval if necessary.
- Schedule meetings (principal/staffulty) with all key groups to discuss concerns, needs, and goals for the year.
- Meet with school counselors to review policies for college visits, standardized testing, identifying kids who are not on track, providing scholarship information, social-emotional support, etc. Ensure all known testing and activity dates have been submitted for inclusion in the central school calendar.
- Meet with cafeteria staff to discuss the upcoming year, review PBIS cafeteria routines.
- Meet with transportation staff to discuss the upcoming year. Review student discipline procedures, consider reviewing PBIS bus routines.
- Meet with athletic director to ensure the coaches' handbook and training sessions have been finalized, fall schedules/contracts with opponents and officials have been verified, and all known activity dates have been submitted for inclusion on the central school calendar.
- Meet with fine arts director and club and class sponsors to ensure all known activity dates have been submitted for inclusion in the central school calendar and fund-raising activities have been approved.

Safety

- Review school safety plans with staff. Ensure emergency systems are in order.
- Review updated student handbooks with all staff members (instructional and non-instructional).
- Finalize dates for fire, disaster, and emergency drills.
 Communicate protocols to staff and parents/guardians.
- Ensure all staffulty have access to mandated training courses.

(Continued on next page)

Operations

 Conduct final building walkthrough with head of maintenance including sport fields and facilities.



- Review budget needs and expenditures.
- Review first day procedures with transportation, first day count, etc.
- Ensure all needed supplies have been received and teachers have what they requested.
- Ensure facilities are reserved and ready for concerts and other extracurricular activities.
- Prepare fall event coverage schedule including sports, fine arts, etc.
- Ensure athletic director and coaches have completed all required WIAA training (concussion, etc.).
- Provide training for individuals handling money (ticket sales, concession stands, fundraising, etc.) to ensure district policies and procedures are followed.
- Finalize all fall athletic/fine arts transportation schedules.
- Schedule fall activity photos.

Learning

Instruction

- Spend time in the classroom early and often to identify struggling teachers and provide support as needed for success. Consider walkthroughs during non-instructional times to build relationships with staff as well.
- Review school's instructional playbook (key instructional strategies, procedures—"What we should always see," "What we might see, What we should never see," etc.) with staffulty.

Assessment

• Review assessment calendar with staff.

Human Capital Management

- Review updated enrollment for any necessary staffing changes.
- Prepare a substitute teacher availability list. Have teachers prepare substitute folders and emergency lesson plans.
- Conduct required staff state mandated trainings.
- · Conduct new staff orientation.
- Conduct substitute teacher orientation, build relationships with your guest teachers ahead of the year. Cover school wide expectations and how to ask for help/support when in the building.
- Review district evaluation policy and procedures with all staff members (instructional and non-instructional).

- Distribute documentation on evaluation timelines.
- Define and communicate protocol for formal and informal classroom observations and walkthroughs. Review CBA and ensure this aligns with district expectations.
- Ensure staff members have a copy of their specific evaluation instrument.
- Ensure all teaching credentials are registered.
- Visit all classrooms to connect, offer encouragement, and provide assistance. Give particular attention and time to new teachers.
- Meet with new teachers weekly during the first month of school to share/clarify information and gather feedback.

Reflection and Growth

- By the first day of student attendance, obtain and review the administrative evaluation tool for the year. If you will be evaluating school leaders (assistant principals, deans, etc.), ensure you have issued them the written notice of evaluation as well as the rubrics and ratings matrix.
- If you are new to supervising an assistant principal, you are required to register for the two-day AWSP Leadership Framework training. Find details at www.awsp.org/framework.

"The best leaders are those who inspire others to dream more, learn more, and become more."

- John Quincy Adams

August



Self-Assessment

Consider completing the AWSP Leadership Framework self-assessment. Visit www.awsp.org/framework to access the Self-Assessment and Reflection Tool and other Framework tools.

Connecting to the AWSP Leadership Framework

- Creating Culture: Prepare powerful welcome back activities for your students, staffulty, and community.
- **Ensuring School Safety:** Develop/modify and review school safety plans with staff.
- **Planning with Data:** Review previous year data and create a plan for improvement or talking points for back-to-school with teachers.
- Aligning Curriculum: Give your staff the gift of time to curriculum map based on the identified standards.
- Improving Instruction: Model strong instruction as you prepare and plan your kickoff staffulty days.
- Managing Resources: Prepare, prepare, prepare for your most precious resource: students and staffulty. How will they know they will be well cared for?
- Engaging Families and Communities: Use social media to promote your message, reminders of events, etc.
- Closing the Gap: Use your "gap analysis" as the driver of your back to school events with all community members.

WHAT SHOULD YOUR PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR BE ASKING YOU RIGHT NOW?



August Focus: Culture Building & Systems Alignment

"How are you setting the tone for a positive, inclusive school culture as staff and students return?"

"In what ways are your operational systems (schedules, communications, safety, etc.) setting staff up for success from day one?"





SCHOOL LEADER Tips for You

Procedures, procedures, procedures! Take the time up front to set procedures you'd like to use throughout the year. Make sure staff who are new and returning are aware. Often we continue to hire new staff members as the year is starting. Be sure these folks know the procedures too.

Revisit or redevelop your shared vision and build your purpose around it. Have clear goals based on your vision. Create a plan for the year to assess possible student skill or academic gaps and intervene or spiral in those skills appropriately.

Meet the students where they are! Celebrate the return of school and acknowledge the *esprit de corps...*we are in this together!

PRACTICAL WISDOM:

Learning Renewal...

In the post-COVID era, schools are still struggling to address the learning loss that occurred during that time. Use these questions to reflect as you continue to build back learning that was lost.

Learning Renewal Questions

- What data do we have which will allow us to analyze the current performance of our students? Are we consistently looking at both formative and summative data? Are we lacking data that we need to consider collecting?
- How can we simplify the planned curriculum to allow for quality catch up of core components?
- What remedial tutoring programs are needed to support students, especially marginalized students? Could some of the remedial work be accomplished remotely using technology before and/or during the school year?
- What changes should be made to our building schedule or school calendar to meet students' learning needs?
- What education partners can play a role in the learning recovery process: teachers, other educational professionals, volunteers, peers?
- What supports are needed for teachers to adapt to the learning demands? Time for planning? Materials? Professional learning?
- How do we keep parents/guardians informed about learning levels and student progress? How are we engaging with parents/guardians as partners in their student's education?
- How do we ensure we are having honest and transparent conversations regarding our students' learning needs and how to meet them?
- What accelerated learning interventions are needed to address any learning loss that has occurred especially in the areas of literacy and numeracy?

Suggested First Faculty Meeting Activity

After thinking about the questions yourself, choose 3-5 for a discussion with your teachers and staff.

- Form small groups. Divide staff into groups of five by numbering off. Give each group a marker and a large sheet of paper to write their answers.
- Start the discussion. Everyone gets the same question and a set amount of time (about 5-7 minutes) to talk and write down their ideas. Give a one-minute warning before time is up.
- Share and build on ideas. Pick one group to share their answers using their chart. Then, ask other groups to add new thoughts or expand on what's already been said. Write down these ideas as you go.
- Repeat with a new question. Give each group a fresh sheet of paper and a new question. Follow the same process.
- Keep the conversation going. Encourage teams to continue these discussions in their
 grade level or department meetings by coming up with more questions to explore. Plan
 time in the next faculty meeting for groups to share what they discussed.

This activity helps everyone learn from each other and keeps important conversations going!

AUGUST: TELLING YOUR LEADERSHIP STORY

"Wins" for Augus	t		THANK-YOUS TO WRITE:
A LESSON LEARNED		NEXT MONT	H'S LEADERSHIP MOVES:
READING LIST:	Self-care p	lans for n	ext month:

SEPTEMBER 2025 MONDAY TUESDAY WEDNESDAY THURSDAY SATURDAY SUNDAY FRIDAY

September

Calendar U

National Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15 - Oct. 15)

Sept 8: International Literacy Day

Sept 11: Day of Remembrance / Patriot Day

Sept 15-16: Mexican Independence Days

Sept 17: Constitution Day

Labor Day is celebrated the first Monday in September. (Check your calendar!)

The first day of Autumn falls between Sept. 21-24. (Check your calendar!)

OTHER SIGNIFICANT RECOGNITIONS:

- Navaratri begins (Hindu Holiday)
- Rosh Hashana (Jewish holiday)
- Yom Kippur (Jewish holiday; falls in September/October)
- National Grandparents Day

Pro Learning & Resources

ESD Regions & AWSP Grade Level Leadership Committees

Washington State is divided into 9 Educational Service Districts (ESDs) and thus our AWSP Grade Level Leadership Committees (GLLC) have regional school leadership representatives in each of these districts. AWSP GLLCs are organized with regional elementary, middle and high school leaders that serve three-year terms. Regional representatives are always on the lookout for new leaders to step forward to assist with leadership responsibilities and event planning. Regions host and participate in a wide range of activities which include student supports (AWSL), school leader recognition events, social and professional networking opportunities, professional development, and local legislative advocacy work. Learn more at www.awsp.org/GLLC.

Bookends: AWSP's Print Newsletter

Bookends of School Leadership is AWSP's print newsletter. A tangible way to keep you informed and inspired, highlighting key AWSP programs, professional learning, and the incredible work of school leaders like you. With so much happening, we know emails and e-newsletters can be easy to miss—so consider this your "in case you missed it" resource, delivered straight to your hands. Stay connected, stay inspired, and keep leading strong. Bookends is published twice a year to "bookend" your year and support you along the way. Find the latest issue at www.awsp.org/bookends.

AWSP Equity Guide

Regardless of your school leader title, racially-literate leaders actively pursue a deep understanding of their own individual racial identity, continually hone their ability to recognize structural and systemic racism, and courageously change the status quo. The AWSP Equity Guide is designed to help you grow your racial equity skills and understanding, and to support your learning and the learning of others. Download a copy, along with supporting resources, at www.awsp.org/equityguide.

Women in Leadership Series and Events

AWSP, along with partners at AESD, AWSP, WAMOA, WASA, WASBO, WSPA, and WSSDA, is committed to building a strong and supportive pathway for women aspiring to or serving in educational leadership roles. Consider joining AWSP's Leadership Network for Women in Leadership. Find out more about Women in Leadership resources and events at www.awsp.org/WIL.

September

Leadership Actions

schedule or information.
Schedule meetings for the month (grade levels department meetings, parent meetings).
Do a final walkthrough with the custodial staff.
Take stock of student/school fundraising efforts discuss with PTA/PTO/athletics department.
Do you have a plan for how to notify staff in an emergency? (Phone tree, email, app?)
What does your evaluation timeline look like? Communicate with supervisor and be prepared to share YOUR goals for the year.
Schedule safety drills.
Review all school safety drill procedures.
Ensure teachers have been given current IEPs and 504s for students with learning differences—review of classroom accommodations.
Develop staff professional learning plan (include SPED).
Plan inclusive school spirit activities to celebrate students and staff.
Schedule an admin-counselor meeting.
Review the student activity calendar.
Establish a shared decision-making process.
Meet with ASB coordinator and student council for beginning of school activities.

St	udent Leadership
	(Secondary) Register for AWSL Fall Programs at www.AWSLeaders.org.
	(High School) Encourage students to apply to teach a small group workshop at the Fall Leader ship Conference. Visit www.AWSLeaders.org.
	(Elementary) Connect with AWSL about our Elementary Programs.
	ALL: Renew or join AWSL Membership.
	ALL: Let AWSL know if you have a new advisor.
	ALL: Purchase AWSL curriculum and resources.
	ALL: Register for ASB finance workshops for advisors, administrators, bookkeepers,

Culture

Building Relationships Challenge



As an ice-breaker activity for your September staffulty meeting, ask each staff member to share one word that describes the start of the school year with a colleague, and explain why. Each person gets one minute, then rotates to another. After a few rounds, pull the group back together and ask individuals to share their favorite word they heard. Then, break into smaller groups and identify what worked well, what needs improvement on flip chart paper. Come back to share with entire group. Collect responses to update planning for the next year.

Belonging Challenge

Ask your staff to set one equity goal to better understand the various cultural groups that exist in their classrooms. Provide staff with data on student's racial identities and/or ask your parents/guardians to share cultural values/beliefs that impact learning. Consider having staff share their goals with their peers during a PLC or full staff meeting.

Write an equity-focused Leadership Professional Growth Plan (PGP) goal. Have a colleague(s) join you and learn. Collect your equity clock hours for recertification with a committed group of school leaders in your system.

Student Centeredness

- Schedule hearing and vision screenings.
- Host "Lunch with the Principal"— a student voice listening session.

Traditions/Celebrations

- Finalize plans for Homecoming activities.
- Plan for fall sports awards ceremonies.
- Plan for fall quarter PBIS reward assembly and activity.

Systems

Vision/Mission



Finalize, receive board approval, and implement School Improvement Plan.

Communication

Communicate the results of first quarter benchmark assessment with students and parents/guardians.

Adults: Register for the National

Collaborative Leadership

 Working with leadership team(s), prepare for Parent/ Guardian and Teacher Conferences.

Safety

Send notices for students who have yet to turn in physicals and/or receive required vaccinations.

Operations

- Send notices for students who have yet to pay fees.
- Conduct student picture day.
- Prepare for any fall season post season tournaments you may be hosting. Participants and parents/guardians can review rules and code of conduct.
- Sign up for ASB budget training and workshops. Learn more on the AWSL site at www.awsleaders.org/asbfinance-law.

Learning

Reflection & Growth/ Result-Orientation



- Begin the teacher observation process with the establishment of growth or improvement plans and pre-observation conferences.
- Assess and reflect on professional and student growth goals and plans.

Assessment

- Ensure teachers have updated information on learning standards.
- Conduct first quarter benchmark assessment.

Human Capital Management

- Provide in-service for new teachers focused on effective assessment and grading including the process and guidelines for submitting grades. Invite all staff to attend.
- Provide in-service for new teachers on how to prepare for parent/guardian and teacher conferences.

Outdoor Education

Establish an Outdoor Education Committee with representation from all grade levels, classified staff, families, and students. Begin exploring a shared vision for what outdoor learning can look like on your campus.
 Find more outdoor education resources at www.outdoorschoolswa.org.



Connecting to the AWSP Leadership Framework

- Creating Culture: Make a commitment to remember every student's name. Be as visible as possible each day.
- **Ensuring School Safety:** Conduct a school-wide, full-scale multi-level evacuation drill.
- Planning with Data: Organize your school's
 Data Team to identify and analyze grade level
 data and systems to monitor student achievement.
- Aligning Curriculum: Follow up with grade levels, department heads on their identified standards and instructional and assessment schedule.
- Improving Instruction: Work with your support person to backwards map your evaluation cycle with all employees for the year.
- Managing Resources: Establish a schedule for regular staff meetings with all stakeholder groups in your school (classified, support, custodial, etc.).
- Engaging Families and Communities:
 Consider scheduling and planning a Family Fun
 Fair that is designed to increase back-to-school
 participation of all families.
- Closing the Gap: Establish your school's "Guided Coalition."

WHAT SHOULD YOUR PRINCIPAL SUPERVISOR BE ASKING YOU RIGHT NOW?



September Focus: Instructional Leadership & Building Relationships

"What are you learning from your initial classroom walk-throughs, and how is that shaping your instructional priorities?"

"How are you intentionally building relationships with students, staff, and families this month?"

September



SCHOOL LEADER Tips for You

Schedule everything on your calendar. Keep a task list and delegate as much as possible to people you trust.

Block out time on your calendar that is sacred to the task, and let your assistant know that you should not be bothered unless there is an emergency or immediate need. Without this, things will be overwhelming as they build up.

Find your calendar method the phone is great, but it's nice to come in to see a whole day laid out. It is something you have to spend time with organizing either daily, weekly or monthly. A good calendar saves you from missing something.

PRACTICAL WISDOM:

How do you use your time?

Time is one of a school leader's most valuable resources—and often, the hardest to manage. Before the school year takes off, take 2–3 days to track how you're actually spending your time. This simple activity can help you align your daily actions with your leadership priorities.

Step 1: Track Your Time

- Choose 2–3 typical workdays to track.
- Use your phone or device to set a reminder every 10 minutes.
- Each time it goes off, log what you're doing using the following codes:

Code	Domain	Examples
С	Culture	Relationships, equity, student-centered work, staff wellness, celebrations
S	Systems	Discipline, communication, operations, planning, meetings
L	Learning	Instruction, walkthroughs, assessment, PD, staff development
Р	Personal	Breaks, lunch, non-work tasks
0	Other	Anything that doesn't fit above

Step 2: Analyze Your Data

- Count how many entries fall under each code
- Calculate percentages: Entries per domain ÷ Total entries = % of time spent.

Example: 23 entries coded as Systems ÷ 57 total entries = 40% of time on Systems.

Step 3: Reflect & Adjust

- Use these reflection questions:
- Am I spending time where I intend to—especially in my priority areas?
- What am I avoiding, intentionally or unintentionally?
- What leadership domain feels most natural to me?
- Where do I need to grow?
- What tasks could be delegated or restructured?

Understanding your dominant leadership domain (Culture, Systems, or Learning) can help clarify where you're leading from—and what might need more attention.

Step 4: Make a Plan

- Based on your findings, set 1–2 clear goals for better time alignment.
- Adjust your schedule, delegate tasks, and restructure routines to support your leadership priorities.
- Reassess in a few months by tracking again for 2–3 days.

SEPTEMBER: TELLING YOUR LEADERSHIP STORY

"Wins" for Septem	ber		THANK-YOUS TO WRITE:
A LESSON LEARNED		NEXT MONT	TH'S LEADERSHIP MOVES:
READING LIST:	Self-care p	lans for n	rext month: