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Lakeside High School Principal Dr. Brent Osborn is Named AWSP's 2026 Secondary Principal of the Year

Innovation and Inclusion are Key at the Future-Oriented Lakeside High School



OLYMPIA — Dr. Brent Osborn, principal at Lakeside High School in Nine Mile Falls School District, is our 2026 Washington State Secondary Principal of the Year. He represents our state at the national level and will compete for the National Association of Secondary School Principals' National Principal of the Year award.

Osborn's focus on strong systems and his belief in his students and staff drive powerful change in his rural school community. At a time when principal turnover is a concern for long-term student and staff wellbeing, Osborn's 14 years (and counting!) at Lakeside High School shows the impact of consistent, meaningful years in the same building.

"When I arrived at Lakeside, only pockets of inclusive instruction existed. Today, we are one of the state's exemplar sites for Inclusionary Practices, a living demonstration site that other districts visit to learn what 'all means all' looks like in action," says Osborn.

Lakeside High School now stands as a model for inclusion and inclusive practices. The school has played a leading role in launching Unified Sports programs that unite students with and without disabilities, building a culture of empathy, respect, and understanding. As the first small school in Eastern Washington to field Unified teams, Lakeside now proudly hosts a Unified Bowling tournament for small schools across the region.

Expanded access to dual credit programs at Lakeside High has reduced financial and geographic barriers for many families while increasing college readiness. Students from all backgrounds and communities can earn college credit thanks to the prioritization of these programs. By helping students understand their postsecondary options, Lakeside High School staff see students no longer choosing courses based on familiarity or ease but based on where they see themselves in the future.

Staff at Lakeside High are encouraged to take risks, try new strategies, and push boundaries to support student success. They do all this while keeping trust from students and families at the forefront. All IEP meetings begin with the learner's strengths and aspirations. The counseling team and front office staff know students' strengths and stories deeply and recognize when to step in with care and compassion. And student voice is paramount, with ASB officers engaging weekly with administration.



Strong leaders, strong schools, strong students.

1021 8th Ave. SE, Olympia, WA 98501 | www.awsp.org
360.357.7951 | 800.562.6100 | fax: 360.357.7966
facebook.com/awsp.principals | [@awsp_principals](https://twitter.com/awsp_principals)

“In short, Dr. Osborn doesn’t just lead a school, he transforms student lives through intentional, compassionate, and equity-focused leadership,” writes Troy Hughes, Osborn’s former assistant principal at Lakeside and the current principal at nearby Mead High School.

Osborn’s passion for education doesn’t stop at the doors of his school; he also leads at the state level, championing public education and principal support in Olympia. As a trusted voice in educational policy, he represents not only the Nine Mile Falls School District but also students and school leaders throughout Washington. His commitment to legislative advocacy helps ensure that rural communities have a seat at the table in statewide education decisions. In his role as the AWSP President for the 2022-23 school year, he advocated on behalf of Washington state principals across the state, region, and country.

Osborn says the true core of his school’s success lies in its people. “What we’ve accomplished here is not about the work of one individual, and certainly not just the principal. It is the result of collective dedication, trust, and belief in students. I’ve had the incredible privilege to hire and work alongside what I genuinely believe is the greatest team of educators ever assembled.”

National Principal of the Year Program

NASSP will select a National Principal of the Year. Dr. Osborn will be honored with winners from each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Department of State Office of Overseas Schools, and the Department of Defense Education Activity. Finalists are chosen before the national winner is named.