

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Stephanie Leitz of Wahkiakum High School Wins 2026 Annalee Braley Membership Award from AWSP**

**OLYMPIA** -- Stephanie Leitz is the fifth winner of AWSP's Annalee Braley Membership Award. Her devotion to mentoring fellow leaders, her support of student leaders through the Association of Washington Student Leaders (AWSL), and her involvement in regional PLC work demonstrates why she so perfectly honors and carries forward Annalee's legacy. Stephanie has been an AWSP member since 2012. She is currently principal at Wahkiakum High School in Wahkiakum School District, serving approximately 128 students in grades 9-12 and their families.



Home of the Mules, Wahkiakum High School's motto is "Today's decisions create tomorrow's successes." Wahkiakum has a strong focus on equipping students with the tools and skills necessary to pursue a successful life after high school.

Through dynamic opportunities like bringing rising freshmen from John C. Thomas Middle School to Cispus Learning Center, Stephanie creates meaningful bridges of belonging where older students welcome, mentor, and guide the next generation into their school community.

"Stephanie Leitz leads with vision, heart, and an unwavering belief in what is possible for students. Her involvement with AWSL is not simply about attending programs, it is about intentionally using powerful experiences as a framework to build something extraordinary within Wahkiakum," says AWSL Director James Layman. "She understands that culture is not created by chance, but through immersive experiences that help students lead, grow, connect, and thrive. Stephanie's leadership is a powerful example of what happens when a principal believes deeply in students, invests in their potential, and creates systems where learning and belonging come alive."

Stephanie is a member of AWSP's High School Grade-Level Leadership Committee, where she helps advise the association on decisions and advocacy efforts in support of AWSP members. She was also part of AWSP's first Mastering Principal Leadership Network and now serves on AWSP's Future School Leaders Workgroup.

Stephanie was presented with the 2026 Annalee Braley Membership Award during AWSP's annual PALLY Award Ceremony at the spring 2026 Grade Level Leadership Committee meeting in Leavenworth.

## **About the Award**

The Annalee Braley Membership Award was created in 2022 to honor the memory of former AWSP Membership Coordinator Annalee Braley, who passed away tragically and unexpectedly in September 2021. Annalee started at AWSP when she was just 19 years old and was about to cross over to 32 years of service at AWSP in various roles. Annalee was one of the biggest reasons AWSP has the strongest membership in the country year after year. Learn more about the Annalee Braley Membership Award at [www.awsp.org/Annalee](http://www.awsp.org/Annalee).

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