

WASC Newsletter

December 15, 2009

Student Council

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Letter from the Vice-President

Hey to all Wyoming Student Leaders!

This past conference was a great one, and an enormous thank you to the Kelly Walsh Student Council for all of their hard work and commitment. As I look forward to the events of the on-coming WASC year, I am thrilled to be accompanied by my fellow board members! This will be an exciting year, as we are all looking to improve WASC in every achievable way. A great way for you to better the WASC year is to make the commitment and apply at least one of the platforms adopted in the past convention.

A little about myself; I am a junior at Lingle-Ft. Laramie High School and this is my third year participating in our schools Volleyball, Basketball, and Track teams. I am anticipating summer, as water skiing is a new found favorite of mine, but also there are a couple of WASC associated events to mark on your calendar. The National Conference in Indianapolis will take place the end of June, which is an eye opening experience for every attendee. One of my favorite events however, SLC, is in danger with attendance rates lowering. It is a magical experience and I heavily encourage you to attend. It is more than a leadership camp; you learn life skills and meet lifelong friends. It's a week out of your summer that will change how you select your future paths.

In an ending note, I would like to leave you with a thought that has occurred to me after attending SLC. You may see yourself as a leader because you are able to organize a group of followers, but you are never truly a leader until you have transformed those followers into leaders.

Happy Holidays!

Sincerely

Hannah Gibbs
WASC President

Dear Student Leaders

Born in Casper, I have lived in Wyoming my entire life. For ten years I attended St. Anthony Catholic School in Casper, where I recruited most of what I lovingly refer to as my "posse." At Natrona County High School I was confronted with a staggering change; my class no longer entailed seven people, but about 450! High school has proven to suit me quite well, though, and I truly enjoy every minute... that is not devoted to homework. Although I would label myself an academic, my time outside of school is chiefly devoted to activities. In the fall, I am a cross-country runner, and I participate in track from January until May. Currently, I am nurturing a yet-inchoate debate talent, as well. (For some reason, spare time seems to balk me.) Art is among my true passions and, when I can, I read. Unfortunately, I am not musically inclined at all. I love to snowboard, and I am excited for the advent of a long Winter Break. Student Council, of course, is one of my favorite pursuits, and the last two years have not only showed me the true import of student leadership, but the thrill of being a part of it. In addition to Student Council I am an officer of the National Honor Society and a member of a community group that is currently attempting to expand healthcare for minors in Wyoming. In the future, I plan to enter the political arena, but might try my hand at law, as well.

Sincerely

Jordan Colman

Letter from the Secretary

“Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he wants to do it.”
Dwight Eisenhower

Dear Student Councils,

As the new secretary for WASC I must remember that I am not the first nor will I be the last secretary. Not only does the past secretary deserve thanks, but also the past President and Vice-President, for without the example that they had set of themselves and the idea of the state board, I might not have ran. There are many reasons that I sought state office, it sounds fun, worth while, and of course it will hopefully add to any application. However, this is neither here nor there, the one main reason that I ran for this position is because I feel that I was the best candidate for this position.

In my daily life I am a dedicated student and friend. Although I would like to think that my friends do not come first, they do, on occasion. I hope that this does not sound that I am not dedicated to WASC, for I would like to think of not only the Executive board, but the many students involved in student council, as friends. Once the school day is over I go to work as a life guard, which is worth all of the heartache. Between work and school, if I find time, I enjoy watching baseball and football. In addition to that I also plan to go out for indoor track and field, where I will pole vault. I love winter and go snowboarding as often as possible. I also play viola in the school orchestra and the upcoming musical. As well as doing this I also spend my time being outside, on my dad's farm out side of Huntley Wyo. Although I do have many pressures on my time, WASC will now be at the top of my list.

Finally I would like to thank Kelly Walsh High School and their Student Council for hosting the most recent conference, where I am sure, we all enjoyed our selves. Because of their generosity I now find my self thanking them as your new WASC state secretary.
Sincerely,

Matt Bergene

This is my 27th year as adviser for Lingle-Ft. Laramie High School and my 4th term on the WASC Board. I have been executive director since 1998. Student council has always been important in my life since I was a member in high school back in the dark ages. My own children have also been council members and both of them were elected WASC officers. My son met his wife through a student council state event. I teach English and am the K-12 librarian here in Lingle. I have a grandson and granddaughter now in Laramie. I love to travel and find that traveling with student council kids is always rewarding. I am currently filling a one year term on the NASSCED board of executive directors. It's my first venture into the national level leadership positions.

Letter from the Board Director Mary Harshberger

Dear Advisers,

Happy Holidays to all of you.

I want to thank you for making WASC convention such a success again this year. It takes dedicated advisers to bring students and Wyoming is blessed with so many of them! I also want to thank Amy Kassel for working with the state department of education in bringing Shannon Pickard to the conference. It was stellar to actually have two keynote speakers. Ben and the Kelly Walsh Council really went out of their way to make us welcome and run an efficient convention.

We are concerned for Earl Reum who is dealing with cancer issues. Earl has brought so much to our state and truly is the reason WASC exists today. We pray for his recovery and will continue his legacy with the programs which become “The single most significant learning experience of our lives.”

It is always hard to tell officers good-bye and Meghan, Trey and Matt served WASC well. Additionally we say thanks to Bruce Berst and wish him the very best in his retirement. I am excited to begin work with the new board. Ben Schanck will be a great new adult member and our officer team will work well together. We will set goals, implement some new ideas and make the year prior to the 55th WASC convention a strong one.

Please send you regional reps info about school projects and let them help set up school exchanges. These board members sometimes feel there isn't much for them to do and we need to encourage their participation.

Again, have a blessed holiday and catch a second wind for the winter and spring semester.

Mary

Letter from Board Member Amy Kassel

Hi! I am a student council advisor and math teacher at East High School in Cheyenne. I have been an advisor and teacher since 1992. My family and I moved to Wyoming in 2001. My husband is the exhibits designer at the Old West Museum in Cheyenne. We have two children who enjoy figure skating and hockey. I like to read and scrapbook in my spare time. I have several favorite student council projects including the Thanksgiving Dinner we prepare for the teachers and the 12 Days of Christmas. We are getting ready for our Winter Homecoming week called Worship the Bird Week. I enjoy serving on the WASC board and directing Summer Leadership Camp. If you have any questions, please get hold of me at kassela1@yahoo.com.

Amy Kassel

Letter from the Southwest Rep

Hi. My name is Kaylee Burnett. I am a sophomore at Farson-Eden High School. I live on a ranch in Eden, Wyoming. I am an active member of the student council, FBLA, and the letterman's club. Outside of school I participate in 4-H. My 4-H lambs are ones I raise myself.

Let me share a few of my favorite things. The important people in my life are my family and friends. Family is a very big part of my life, we do a lot together. For fun I enjoy hanging out with my friends, helping my grandpa on his ranch, and riding my horses. I love being outside with the animals. I spend lots of time with my horses in the summer. The quote I try to live by is "you can alter your life by altering your attitude." My favorite color is bright orange. My favorite thing to do is rodeo and my favorite event is goat tying. My favorite subject is science and my favorite sport is basketball. I also play volleyball. Cars is my favorite movie.

I am very excited to be the Southwest Regional Representative. I hope to learn a lot from this experience and for everyone to be satisfied with the way that I serve you.

Sincerely,
 Kaylee Burnett
 Southwest Regional Representative

"The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing."

Walt Disney

Letter from the Northwest Rep

Dear Northwest Region,

Hey Wyoming! My name is Jessica Neary, your new northwest regional representative. So far I have been able to contact each school by at least emails and I'm very excited for this year! Here's a little bit about myself:

I have lived in Wyoming my whole life, currently in Cody. As a teen, I don't think we understand how many opportunities this state it gives us. Plus, when we have a convention such as WASC, we can fit everyone into a school auditorium- not many states can say they have the ability to do that!

I am seventeen and like most, very busy with daily teenager life. I am the Junior Class President at my school- in the midst of planning for our prom in May of the upcoming year. I am also a member of the National Honors Society, CAN (Cody's drug-and-alcohol-free program: Change Attitudes Now), and play varsity volleyball. Recently I traveled to Washington D.C. and lobbied with my father for the American Heart Association. I went to SLC last summer and it was "The single most significant learning experience of my life." Trust me- it's that great. I have a dog, three cats and a hedgehog. Anything else?

I have some great ideas for our region this year. Hopefully, we can share more information between councils and get some creativity flowing when your council needs help with dance themes, holiday activities, and whatever else you can imagine. Everyone can benefit from each other plus if you need specifics on certain projects- I'm here for you. Please let me know if you have questions and I can get you in contact with another council who knows how to help.

I look forward to hearing from your council again and getting to know you better!

Sincerely,
 Jessica Neary
 Northwest Regional Representative

Dear Southeast Region,

My name is Moseh Cho. I lived in Wyoming for 2 years now. I am involved in Student Council, Key Club, Link Crew, YAGA, and IB Student Steering Committee. I am in Orchestra, and play the violin. I enjoy ball room hip hop and swing dancing during my free time as well as play the guitar and juggle the soccer ball. I run cross country, indoor track, and play soccer for school sports. My Birthday is May 29 1993, I am sixteen. I really want to go to a good university after high school, i really enjoy being active in Stuco and Key Club. Not sure what else i should right, I go to East High School and i treasure the friendships that I have.

Sincerely,

Moseh Cho

Southeast Region Representative

Letter from the Southeast Rep

Dear Central Region

I am Brigit Kelly and I am a sophomore at Natrona County High School. I was the Freshman Class president last year and I am now the Sophomore Class president. I quickly became involved with Student Council last year, starting by going to summit, then following with going to Kaycee getting the opportunity to see Dr. Earl Reum speak. After going to Kaycee and learning more about me as a leader it was truly an inspiration to dedicate myself to student council. After I attended WASC for the first time last year I knew that I wanted to become more involved in Student Council by engaging myself in the state council. This year I ran for Central Regional Representative, so I could do just that, become connected with Student Council at the state level. I cannot wait for this year, this experience, and to get to know all of the council members and advisors from around the state!

Sincerely,

Brigit Kelly

Central Region Representative

Letter from the Central Rep

“Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't, you're right. “

Henry Ford

Platforms

The following platforms were debated and voted on during the WASC convention. The platforms concerning elementary and middle schools student councils, school climate, and sexting were voted down. The only two that were approved were the platforms about global involvement and safe driving. This means that to become an honor council each school must do something which will fall under global awareness and safe driving.

Platform I Global Awareness and Involvement

Chairs: Eric Inman Wind River
Susie Button Newcastle

Whereas

- In our rapidly changing society, an urgent need exists for schools to address and infuse global awareness
- and whereas students are increasingly confronted with many issues that require a global education focus and will face a new world order thereby creating a need to acquire a global education.

and whereas issues such as global ecology, “green” living, hunger, children’s services, and other humanitarian efforts must be addressed therefore be it resolved that member schools of the Wyoming Association of Student Councils actively promote global awareness and international projects in their schools which include, but are not limited to:

- working with administration to provide courses to broaden knowledge of international issues;
 - promoting projects such as UNICEF; Heifer International or others verified as reputable charities which focus on helping children and families in foreign countries;
- promote an active awareness of the state-of-the-planet to younger students and in the community;
- encourage assemblies and/or speakers with international perspectives;
- seek funding from local sources to support global projects;
 - focus on one international/global project every year.

Platform II School Climate and Standardized Testing

Chairs: Trent Jordan Wind River
Michael Chapin

Whereas

- student councils are vital in establishing a sense of camaraderie which can improve the school climate
- and whereas students who identify with other students in their school and have a sense of school pride beyond athletics and activities

"Do all the good you can, and make as little fuss about it as possible."

Charles Dickens

- and whereas a positive school climate can lead to improved test scores
- and whereas standardized testing such as PAWS and MAP have become an integral part of the education system
- and whereas a school is judged and funded in part by the students' success on assessments and whereas students may not understand the importance of maximizing effort on standardized assessments

therefore be it resolved that member schools of the Wyoming Association of Student Councils actively promote improving the school climate of their respective schools and encourage students to maximize efforts on standardized tests by fostering an improved school climate and motivation for students taking standardized tests which include, but are not limited to:

- requesting comfortable testing areas which may include music, decorations, and snacks;
 - encouraging and rewarding those who show improvement in test scores with perquisites such as parking permits, options in scheduling, and other tangible rewards;
 - provide peer mentors to help students prepare to test more effectively;
 - actively working with administration to heighten students' awareness of test dates, possible rewards, and significance of the test;
 - volunteering to cover test preparation sites;
 - help publicizing test results to challenge future test takers;
- working with administration to set goals up to 12 months ahead for the upcoming classes of test takers.

Platform III Safe Driving

Chairs: Angie Bellamy Natrona County High School

Alena Gronewold Lingle-Ft. Laramie High School

Whereas

- teen driving issues constantly receive national attention
- and whereas teens are novices in driving experience
- and whereas teens frequently have other teens in the vehicle and can become distracted
- and whereas 6000 deaths and 300,000 injuries are a result of teen driving crashes
- and whereas nearly every high school in Wyoming has had students seriously injured or killed in auto related crashes

and whereas student council should promote safety for all students

therefore be it resolved that member schools of the Wyoming Association of Student Councils will actively promote safe driving programs which include but are not limited to:

- rewarding students wearing seatbelts when they arrive in school parking lots;
 - working with local law enforcement and school resource officers to raise awareness of teen driving issues;
 - distributing pamphlets regarding safe driving;
 - providing posters and announcements with safe driving facts and reminders;
 - participating in national programs such as Join the Ride or Keep the Drive to help students see the dangers of driving;
- supporting pledge to drive safely programs.

Platform IV Elementary and Junior High/Middle School Student Council

Chairs: Kristina Ramos Sundance High School

Larissa Fleming Evanston High School

Whereas

leadership is a critical and teachable skill which should be promoted prior to high school
and whereas student council needs to be self promoting
and whereas underclassmen are often unprepared for student council experience
and whereas elementary and junior high and middle school students are mentored by high school councils in many states across the U.S.

and whereas the students at younger ages are interested in making their schools better places for education and activity

therefore be it resolved that member schools of the Wyoming Association of Student Councils will actively promote involvement in student council in middle schools, junior high schools and elementary schools in their own locales through projects that include but are not limited to:

- speaking with administration regarding the benefits of a student council program at junior high and middle school level;
- providing training for younger students who are interested in leadership roles;
- informing younger students of possible programs and activities which promote leadership;
- encouraging the Wyoming High School Activities Association to allow middle school and junior high schools to be a part of the Wyoming Association of Student Councils;
- mentoring new councils for several years to ensure their success;
- sponsoring joint meetings with other councils in junior high and/or middle school;
allowing junior high and middle school students to attend state training events.

Platform V Cyber Bullying

Co-Chairs: Rhiann Dameron Douglas

Jay Egan-Wright Central

Whereas

- the use of technology can be very detrimental when used to be hurtful to other people
- and whereas cell phones are a leading cause of bullying
- and whereas laws are just beginning to catch up with the seriousness of cyber bullying and sexting crimes
- and whereas schools must take an active role in protecting students from all bullying
- and whereas students are unaware of the criminal content of using their phones and computers inappropriately
- and whereas the Wyoming State Department of Education and State Legislature have required that every school district have an anti-bullying plan by December 31, 2009
encouraging students to report cyber bullying and sexting offenses to school resource personnel or administration

therefore be it resolved that member schools of the Wyoming Association of Student Councils will actively promote programs which inform students about cyber bullying which include, but are not limited to:

- working with their district administration on the district enacted bullying policies
- hosting assemblies and awareness meetings for students, parents, and community
- using appropriate means to inform students of the legal outcomes of what they may see as teasing or non-threatening behavior
- publicizing information about cyber bullying and sexting through posters, press releases and announcements

“A person is a success if they get up in the morning and gets to bed at night and in between does what he wants to do.”

Bob Dylan

During the year the previous WASC officers worked tirelessly to make the convention happen. Under the direction of Meghan Kolf, Trey Pierson, and Matthew Herron, the executive council was able to make the November conference one to remember. Together the three of them put in the extra time and effort to make sure that the state council would not fail, through their dedication and commitment the state has only gotten better. So a heartfelt “Thank you” goes out to the three of them. The new state board will have large shoes to fill, and can only help to meet the standards set by Meghan Kolf, Trey Pierson, and Matthew Herron.

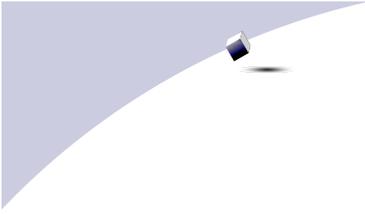
Thank yous

This past year marked the 54th annual WASC convention. It was the second time that Kelly Walsh has been the gracious hosts to the 500+ students from across the state. Kelly Walsh High School and Student Council truly fulfilled all of the tasks and duties to them. Because of the generosity of KW the convention happened, the dedication shown by the students and teaches of Kelly Walsh is greatly appreciated, warm thanks goes out to Kelly Walsh for their hosting of the WASC convention.

The first meeting of the WASC executive board took place on December 13th. At this meeting the group began to get to know each other and plans for the new year were started. Also at this meeting it was agreed that if your council is supporting any non-profit charity, it will count toward the state charity category in the honor council application. We encourage you to support Make A Wish or another charitable organization of your council's choice.

December Board Meeting
Announcements

The next board meeting will be held on the 10th of February. The attendance of the Regional Representatives is encouraged. The meeting will take place in Casper. Hope to see you there.



Calendar

December 13	First board meeting	Cheyenne
January 30-February 1	Region IV Meeting	Minneapolis
February 10	Second board meeting	Casper
June	Board Meeting	Big Horn/Sheridan
June 15	Honor Council books due	
June 24-25	NASC pre-trip	Indianapolis
June 26-29	NASC	Indianapolis
July 12-16	SLC	Casper
September 12	Board Meeting	Riverton
September 13	WASC Summit	Riverton
September 14	WASC Summit	Casper
November 8-9	55 th Annual Convention	Big Horn/Sheridan