



**WEMTA Committee Report
Legislative Advocacy Committee Report
Date: February 2011**

Person Reporting to the Board: Allison Kaplan

Committee Charge:

Maintain a communications network through which members can respond to legislative and other governmental issues of importance to the Association.
Develop a working relationship with the Legislative Consultant and work together on legislative strategies for the Association and articles and reports for the Dispatch and listserv.
Know and communicate with legislators and Department of Public Instruction

Informational items:

On the National Front

EETT is currently funded as a continuing resolution at \$100. Million. Congress will probably act in the next couple of months on a budget that may have significant changes for educational funding. The President will be releasing his budget for FY12 in Mid February and it probably will not include direct funding for ed tech, but a consolidation of educational program funding. ESEA is likely to be brought up and changes enacted later in the year. Senator Bingaman has proposed a revamped ATTAIN program that would focus on only competitive funding grants and work with consortia of states. It is important with all the changes and the competition for federal funding dollars that you let your congress member know why and how ed tech funding can make the differences in our schools and country.

There are two important events coming up that WEMTA will be participating in, The ABCs of Advocacy, on the morning of April will be sponsored by ISTE This event will help attendees learn more about their congressional members and how to effectively advocate for the importance of ed tech for effective learning on the federal state and local level.

ISTE, CoSN, SIIA and SETDA will be co-sponsoring *The Washington ED Tech Policy Summit* and Hill visits in Washington DC on April 12th PM and April 13th. The WEMTA legislative committee is sending three representatives to Washington DC for these events. We will be well represented, as the participants will provide outreach to three congressional districts

SIGMS , the special interest group for media specialists in ISTE just recently formed an Advocacy Committee. The wiki can be found at:

<http://sigms.iste.wikispaces.net/advocacy>

They will be sponsoring a webinar on the benefits of ISTE membership for State Library Associations next Thursday, Feb. 10 at 7:00 PM CST. Annette Smith and Kathy Sanders will be presenting. Please join us. How to Connect:

http://iste.acrobat.com/sigms_benefits_affiliate_membership/

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is up for reauthorization. AASL has developed a position statement which constituents may use in contacting their legislators about this issue (see:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/aaslissues/positionstatements/esea.cfm>). The hope has always been that school librarians would be recognized as instructional professionals involved in the teaching process. In President Obama's Blue Print for [educational] Reform, regarding the reauthorization of ESEA, libraries are mentioned only in passing under Literacy; "States will provide competitive subgrants to high-need districts to support comprehensive literacy programs in the grades and schools with the greatest local need. Programs must provide effective professional development for teachers and school leaders; high- quality state- or locally-determined curricula, instructional materials, and assessments; interventions that ensure that all students are served appropriately; and language- and text-rich classroom environments that engage and motivate students. Literacy programs may also include activities related to family literacy, improving library services, and other efforts to improve literacy." (p 26). Librarians are not mentioned at all. This point needs to be raised with legislators.

ALA's Legislative Day will be held on May 9-10 in Washington, D.C.

On the State Front

WASB Common School Fund Proposal

WEMTA members worked hard to make their voices heard about a proposal that would have allowed school districts to use up to 50 percent of their Common School Fund allocations to add or retain library media positions. For the majority of districts the amount would have been so small that it would not fund a full time position. The proposal was narrowly defeated at the WASB Delegate Assembly.

Library Legislative Day

WEMTA is once again co-sponsoring with WLA the Library Legislative Day on Tuesday, February 22. Materials about the Common School Fund and other school related issues will be included in the packets for legislators. There was a huge turn over in legislative representation in this last election. WEMTA members are encouraged to contact their new representatives and welcome them to their posts. Here is information

about virtual participation in this event:
<http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/day/VirtualLLD.htm>

ETAN

WEMTA will again be hosting an ETAN booth at the WEMTA Conference on Monday 3/21 and Tuesday 3/22. The booth will be on the terrace outside of the Exhibit Halls. The times will be posted on the website soon. We could use volunteers, especially board members. Please contact Kathy Sanders or Allison Kaplan to volunteer. Bytespeed will be providing a Netbook to give away as part of a drawing for participants. Apple and Bytespeed will be providing use of laptops at the ETAN booth.

Student Showcase

WEMTA will be sponsoring a Student Showcase at the Capitol on Tuesday, April 5th, so our state leaders can see the innovative ways our students are using technology. We will be partnering with WASB. We are hoping to showcase some of the EETT and ARRA exemplary projects, but are also open for suggestions to highlight other projects around the state. If you know of a great project or program please contact us and let us know so we can get them involved.