

Educating Hearts and Minds

2015 WASB President Wanda Owens calls for school leaders to remain focused on leading for students

Wanda Owens emphasized the importance of educating the whole child, reminisced on how far education has come since her days in a one-room school, and looked back at the WASB's progress over the course of the past year.

During her year as WASB President, Owens advocated for programs and initiatives that help develop students' hearts as well as minds. Owens has been a long-time supporter of fine arts and music programs in public education.

"These programs help us to educate not only the minds of our students, but also their hearts," Owens said. "Despite the public's focus on testing, curriculum and technology, we must never forget that we are teaching students, not subjects."

Owens laid out the important role the school board plays in developing a positive school culture by establishing and following a strong vision.

"A key to our students' success is a well-trained school board that, together with its superintendent, is focused squarely on academic achievement," Owens said.

In her days as a student, Owens attended one-room schoolhouses in southern Wisconsin. Her seventh- and eighth-grade years were spent in a school in rural Barneveld where she was the only student in her grade.

"The school building had no running water, no indoor plumbing and one oil burner for heat," Owens said. "Art and music came to us by radio — when it worked, there was



no band, no physical education, for me, no real learning."

Public education has come a long ways since those days and, Owens said, the WASB looks to continue public education's progress forward. In the past year, the WASB has focused on improving school board member training in expanded workshops around the state. Owens also noted the WASB's advocacy efforts

as staff helped lead the budget fight to restore school funding cuts proposed by the governor and to increase state aid.

"As school leaders, we need to stay united in advocating for public education and ensuring that our children receive the investment they deserve," Owens said. "There is no greater goal for society than educating the hearts and minds of our youth." ■

Olson Elected to Lead WASB in 2016

Stu Olson, WASB Region 1 director, was elected by the WASB Board of Directors as the 2016 WASB President. Olson is president of the Shell Lake School Board.

Region 2 director Capt. Terry McCloskey, USN Retired, a Three Lakes school board member, was elected 1st Vice President. Mary Jo Rozmenoski, Region 6 director, a Black River Falls school board member, was elected 2nd Vice President.

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