



**“Challenging People to Shape a Better Future Now”**

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*The Skanner Newspaper*, established in October 1975, is a weekly publication, published each Wednesday by IMM Publications Inc.,

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*The Skanner* is a member of the National Newspaper Publishers Association and West Coast Black Publishers Association.

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## Schools

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The audit dings state school officials for overstating how much money is spent on classroom instruction by adding in a second number called teaching support.

The approach implies Washington spends 70 percent of school dollars in the classroom, which would be more than any other state in the nation. The federal government paints a different picture.

Washington and 11 other states spent about 60 percent of school dollars in classrooms, according to a 2009 comparison by the National Center for Education Statistics. Another 18 states spent more and 20 spent less. Washington's numbers have improved slightly since then, but no more recent national comparisons are available.

The rest of the money goes to transportation, food, nursing, counseling, outside help for special education students, administration and a variety of central district office functions.

The audit recommends the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction improve its transparency by taking the federal approach and use just the dollars

John Oliver III, a drummer for Doc Maynard and Company performed Saturday, June 9, at the 29th Annual Juneteenth Celebration at Pratt Park. The 3-day event included music, food and “Church in the Park” on Sunday.



SUSAN FRIED PHOTO

doing this on some reports and would look into the possibility of changing others.

The audit also urged the office to maintain the database the auditor's office created for the purpose of the study, saying it would help districts save more money if they could continue to see their operations compared to their peers.

Dorn said he would discuss the

report for its wealth of information and practical advice for school districts.

Digging a little deeper and reading between the pages can reveal a lot about the choices individual school districts are making, said Finne, director of the Center for Education at the Washington Policy Center.

For example, she found it particularly interesting that Seattle Public Schools spends 59.7 percent on teaching, while many neighboring districts push a lot higher percentage of their money toward the classroom.

The Bellevue School District, for example, puts 65.6 percent of its dollars into teaching and Lake Washington directs 65.5 percent toward learning.

“That instruction number is very important,” Finne said. “It reflects who is influencing allocation decisions in the district and what the priorities are in the district. Clearly they’re not making instruction the priority.”

She notes that most private schools and public charter schools

do an even better job at this, because they do not have much of a central office staff to support and private schools do not have to pay for transportation.

The union that represents most of the school workers outside of the classroom, plus teacher's aides, found the auditor's report troubling.

“The auditor's report goes in a completely opposite direction than what the courts and the Legislature have all been saying over the past few months, that we need more investment in education rather than less,” said Rick Chisa, spokesman for Public School Employees of Washington.

He noted that for every teacher laid off since 2008, 12 other school workers have lost their jobs as custodians, or secretaries or cafeteria workers, etc.

Instead of finding 1 percent more money for teachers, Chisa would spend those dollars on teacher's aides and add 3,000 more adults helping kids in the classroom.

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that pay for teaching when it reports expenditures for classroom instruction.

Superintendent of Public Instruction Randy Dorn responded to that section of the audit by saying the office was already

idea with his department's data management committee and see if they think it would be worthwhile to find the money to keep track of this information in the future.

School reform advocate Liv Finne commended the auditor's

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

# SEATTLE 2012



If you have an event you want to share with the community, email it two weeks in advance to *The Skanner* at [info@theskanner.com](mailto:info@theskanner.com)

### Friday June 15

YESLER COMMUNITY CENTER HOSTS JUNETEENTH CELEBRATION. Yesler Community Center invites the community to celebrate Juneteenth from 5 – 8 p.m. The evening will be filled with entertainment, arts, crafts, food from various cultures and more. 917 Yesler Way.

### Saturday June 16

IRANIAN CULTURAL ROOTS AND CONTEMPORARY INFLUENCES AT THE IRANIAN FESTIVAL. Influences of Persian cultures, live entertainment, Rumi poetry, and much more. 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. Seattle Center Armory Center House.

### Saturday & Sunday June 16 & 17

FREMONT FAIR. The 41st annual Fremont Fair is a community celebration. Fair includes local bands, arts & Crafts, shopping, food and drinks and much more. 10 a.m. – 8 p.m. Phinney Neighborhood Center Gallery, 6535 Phinney Ave. N.

### Thursday – Friday June 21 – 22

ROCK-N-ROLL MARATHON HEALTH & FITNESS EXPO. 60 exhibitors will offer free samples, showcase the latest in running gear, sports apparel and much more. Free admission and open to the public. Thursday 11 a.m. – 7 p.m., Friday 10 a.m. – 7 p.m. Century Link Field Event Center.

### Friday – Sunday June 22-24

BOOK ON OVER TO WARREN G. MAGNUSON PARK: FRIENDS OF THE SEATTLE PUBLIC MINI BOOK SALE. The book sale is open to the public from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Friday, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Saturday and 9 a.m. – 2 p.m. Sunday. 7400 Sand Point Way NE, Building 30 Workshop.