

Standing Legislative Positions Calendar

Standing Legislative Positions (SLPs) are positions that are so important or universally accepted by school directors that they do not need to be reintroduced every year to remain on WSSDA's legislative agenda. Once, adopted, these positions remain SLPs until they are amended or eliminated.

The Standing Positions Calendar is divided into three parts: Additions to SLPs, amendments to SLPs, and elimination of SLPs.

Part 1 considers proposals that are eligible to become SLPs. These positions have been approved by the Legislative Assembly three times, without substantive changes. If approved by the Assembly again this year, these proposals will become part of the association's Standing Legislative Positions.

Part 2 and Part 3 include proposals to amend or eliminate existing SLPs. Most of these proposals come from the Legislative Committee as a result of their annual review of 20% of SLPs (per WSSDA By-laws, Article IX, Section 6, B-3). However, districts may also propose amendments or eliminations.

Part One: Additions to Standing Positions

The following positions were adopted by Legislative Assemblies in 2013, 2014 and 2015 making them eligible to become SLPs this year. The Legislative Committee voted to bring these forward to the Assembly again this year. If approved, they will be added to WSSDA's list of SLPs. If a proposal is not approved as an SLP, the Assembly has the option of voting to retain it as a regular position for the next legislative session. In this case, a vote will occur immediately following the failure of adoption as an SLP, with a motion by the Legislative Committee to approve it as a regular position.

LEARNING

1. Common Core Funding

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation to ensure the state fully funds the transition, implementation and execution of new assessments required by Common Core Standards, which include formative and year-end assessments.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

As Washington incorporates Common Core there are costs for new materials, professional development, and testing. Adequate investments by the state are critical to ensure teachers and students are able to transition to Common Core seamlessly.

2. Enhanced Funding for Transitional Bilingual Education

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support the recommendations of the Quality Education Council (QEC) for funding and instructional hour increases for the Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program as outlined below:

- increase hours of English language acquisition instruction for students in English proficiency levels 1-3 (as measured by the annual state based English proficiency exam) to provide six to eight instructional hours per week for grades 6-12;
- provide two years of three additional hours of English language instruction for exited students (level 4 students in all grades); and,
- increase funding to support this as outlined by the QEC

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

To close the opportunity gap in the state, school districts need additional and focused resources for our English Language Learner (ELL) students. Investments in the Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) are integral to guaranteeing that all students meet standards and are college and career ready. Providing additional instructional support will accelerate English language acquisition and help ELL students understand instruction in core classes.

3. Kindergarten Preparedness

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support policies or legislation that provide resources for kindergarten preparedness, especially for children in poverty or for whom English is not their primary language.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

The research is clear; students who are better prepared when they arrive for kindergarten have a greater likelihood of academic success and require fewer social service interventions later in life. This is true for all children, but especially for low-income students and English Language Learners who are less likely to have experienced comprehensive early childhood education before kindergarten. Public early childhood education programs allow closer alignment with the public K-12 system, providing a more seamless transition into kindergarten.

4. Removing Barriers to Innovation in Public Schools

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that provides public schools the same opportunities as charter schools to create innovative programming based on outcomes not tied to mandated seat time, staffing, grade levels, or operational restrictions.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

We should encourage innovation in our existing public schools rather than creating a parallel system of charter schools that are not held to the same laws and rules and are not accountable to taxpayers. Districts already have in place mechanisms to be successful innovators, including strong partnerships with businesses and non-profits, and community support. Extending the rights of charter schools to all public schools would allow flexibility; promoting cost-effectiveness and efficiency, while maintaining accountability with existing data performance tools.

TEACHING

5. Staff Assignments

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that provides the needed flexibility for staff assignment decisions made by district administration, to ensure efficient and effective placements are based on qualifications and fit to the individual school needs as codified in RCW 28A.150.230.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

The state holds districts and building leaders accountable for student learning so districts should be allowed to place staff based on need, skill and endorsements. Transfers based on seniority are not always compatible with state and federal mandates or collectively bargained agreements. Increased flexibility in assignments would help to get the right staff to the areas of greatest need. Usually, schools with more high-need students have the least qualified and experienced teachers, compounding the achievement gap. The legislature took steps in 2010 and in 2012 to change the evaluation process and thereby “tenure,” allowing for more control at the district and building level.

GOVERNANCE

6. Employee Dismissal

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Spokane School District

WSSDA supports legislation to provide districts with a reasonable process by which to terminate certified staff, yet protect terminated staff’s due process rights. Pre-termination due process should be streamlined so that the termination decision can be expedited. The due process rights of the terminated employee would remain protected by the post-termination hearings process.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

Under current law, school districts are not allowed to make a local decision to terminate a certificated employee for cause; they can only initiate a process resulting in an external hearing and decision regarding the proposed termination. The process requires an extensive pre-termination analysis that can be time-consuming and expensive for districts, exceeds minimum requirements of due process guaranteed by the Constitution, and compels districts to pay a terminated employee's salary during a pending appeal. The procedural costs and continuing salary obligation come at the expense of student programs and services. Districts should not have to decide whether or not they can "afford" to terminate an employee for cause.

7. Building Schools outside Urban Growth Areas

Recommendation: DO PASS Submitted by: Bethel and Spokane School Districts

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation to allow school districts to build a school outside of a county's Urban Growth Area (UGA) under the state's Growth Management Act (GMA) when certain circumstances are met. The legislation should also authorize counties that fully plan under the GMA to permit the construction of schools outside of designed UGAs when specified criteria are met. Legislation should establish planning actions that counties must satisfy in complying with the requirement to permit school construction outside of UGAs. Legislation must be applicable to all districts in the state that can demonstrate the required circumstances, and not be arbitrarily limited to only select counties or school districts.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

The GMA requires that new schools to accommodate urban growth be located within established UGAs or on land adjoining existing schools. The cost of land within UGAs is often so high that that it is impossible for a district to pass a bond to purchase the land. In many cases, the only reasonable way to even assemble adequate acreage for school sites within the UGA is to condemn residential and/or commercial properties. This is an unacceptable practice and will harm relationships between school districts and their local taxpayers. Building on land adjoining existing schools is also impossible in many cases. Even when possible, this alternative increases travel time for students, exacerbates early start times, and results in "mega schools" not proven to be the best for student achievement.

The implications of small appointed GMA boards usurping the authority of local school boards to site schools are becoming more apparent. At least 27 districts are currently impacted statewide. Exempting school districts from the current regulations would return planning of appropriate educational facilities to locally elected school boards as envisioned in the state constitution.

8. Changing School Bond Approval Requirements

Recommendation: DO PASS Submitted by: Spokane School District

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that would change the bond approval percentage from 60 percent to a simple majority.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

Many school districts pass bond proposals with more than 50% of the vote, but are unable to achieve the 60% supermajority required. WSSDA specifically supports House Bill 1941 (the subject of the next proposal) which would allow a simple majority for bond passage in November general elections only. However, WSSDA continues to support a simple majority in all bond elections.

9. Defining a Minimum School Day

Recommendation: DO PASS Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall support and/or initiate legislation that authorizes local school districts to define the minimum standards of a school day until the legislature provides funding for an additional 80 hours of professional development and collaboration time.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

School districts should be able to exercise local control over their calendars. Districts sometimes must seek waivers from the 180-day school year (while still maintaining the required instructional hour thresholds) because it is their only cost-effective option to provide professional development, collaboration or planning time to implement state education mandates. If Basic Education was fully funded, including funding for professional development, waivers from the school day for training and collaboration would not be necessary.

10. Mayoral Control

Recommendation: DO PASS Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA opposes legislation that authorizes mayoral control of public K-12 schools.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

Mayoral control is contrary to the State Constitution which vests governing authority for public education in locally elected school boards and an elected state Superintendent of Public Instruction.

11. Teacher and Principal Evaluation System Implementation

Recommendation: DO PASS Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that ensures full funding for the Teacher/Principal Evaluation Program and ensures sufficient preparation time for the evaluation and documentation process.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Currently there is insufficient money provided by the state to pay for the time required to administer the Teacher/Principal Evaluation Program. Principals and teachers spend many hours preparing for and documenting the required evaluations.

12. Washington State Voting Rights

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA supports legislation that maintains local school board authority to determine the structure of the school district's voting subdivisions.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

Under current law (RCW 28A.343.050), locally-elected school boards, upon filing of a petition signed by at least twenty percent of the registered voters in a school district and upon school district voter approval through a special election, may dissolve directors' districts into no fewer than three (3) director districts and no more than two (2) at-large districts. The difference between the two types of seats is that in a director district seat, the board member must reside within the director district. In an at-large seat, the board member may reside anywhere in the district. In the vast majority of counties, both types of seats are elected by a majority of voters residing within the school district, in what are considered "at-large" elections.

Previous versions of a state voting rights act would have created legal liability and significant legal costs for all districts with at-large voting and/or an at-large election process. Finding eligible candidates to run for school board seats, which are by and large uncompensated, much less ones that require a specific area of residence, is challenging for most districts but especially so for districts in rural areas. School boards need to retain the flexibility that allows them to increase their at-large seats to the statutory maximum. Additionally, the district-wide elections process allows all individual school board members to be accountable to all voters in the district, rather than a select few.

The *federal* Voting Rights Act of 1965, which has been in place for over 50 years, has been used and continues to be used successfully by minority groups to sue local jurisdictions in federal court when they believe their voting rights have been violated. A remedy for such violations is therefore already well established.

FUNDING AND ALLOCATIONS

STATE FUNDING, APPORTIONMENT, AND LEVIES:

13. Allowing Submission of a Two-year Budget to OSPI

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation to allow school districts the option of submitting to OSPI a two-year district budget.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

In challenging fiscal times school districts suffer from their dependence on, and the ambiguity of, state funding because district budgets are adopted well before they know what their apportionment will be. Having the ability to adopt and submit a biennial budget would help districts stabilize their financial outlook and increase predictability.

14. Levy Rollbacks

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Federal Way

Introduced in: 2013

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which would ensure that no school district loses levy authority if the district's apportionment/budgets are decreased by the state. Districts should be held harmless for at least a two-year period.

ARGUMENT FOR ADOPTION AS A STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

The legislature will be making significant decisions regarding the use of local levy funds and state funding for compensation related to basic education activities during the 2017 session. It is critical that the legislature ensures that these decisions enhance the ability of school districts to meet the needs of all students and not create situations where districts go backwards in terms of funding and services. At the same time, it is possible that the Legislature may not meet its responsibility to amply fund educator compensation (per ESHB 2261 and the *McCleary* court decision) by the required deadline of the 2017-18 school year. This proposal would ensure that districts would be 'held harmless' for at least two years during any transition period.

Every district will be impacted uniquely by legislative decisions, depending on their current size, funding levels, negotiated agreements, and local education delivery decisions. This uniqueness will create challenges as the legislature grapples with creating a consistent funding system for compensation – making a hold harmless provision critical during the implementation phase so that districts can rely on the combination of state and local funding necessary to meet the requirements of their negotiated agreements. This proposal is intended to limit the negative impacts a district would face during the transition to a new funding formula.

PART TWO: AMENDMENTS TO STANDING LEGISLATIVE POSITIONS

Part Two considers amendments to current Standing Legislative Positions (SLPs). Article IX, Section 6, B-3 of WSSDA's by-laws directs the Legislative Committee to review about 20% of the association's SLPs for possible updates through amendment or elimination. Districts may also propose amendments or eliminations through the position solicitation process each spring. In spring 2016, a sub-committee of WSSDA's Legislative Committee and Board of Directors reviewed 100% of the SLPs in an effort to streamline and/or consolidate like-positions and/or positions that may be out-of-date.

FUNDING AND ALLOCATIONS

STATE FUNDING, APPORTIONMENT, AND LEVIES:

15. 7.1.1 Levy Equalization/Levy Lid/Grandfathered Inequities

Recommendation: DO PASS AS AMENDED

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which would

- remove grandfathered inequities in K-12 education levy lids.
- increase the percent of levy impacted by local effort assistance (LEA) to 20 percent.

WSSDA opposes reining in or repealing the levy lid; however, if an increase in the levy lid were adopted by the Legislature, WSSDA supports requiring that LEA be fully funded and a commensurate increase in LEA be included.

ARGUMENT FOR THE AMENDMENT:

In the review of all SLPs in spring 2016, the Legislative Committee identified redundancies in SLP 7.1.1 and 7.1.12. In order to reduce this redundancy, this proposal combines the two into one by amending 7.1.1. In the next round of voting, you will be asked to eliminate 7.1.23.

ORIGINAL SLP Wording:

7.1.1 Levy Equalization/Levy Lid

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which would increase the percent of levy impacted by levy equalization (local effort assistance) to 20 percent. WSSDA opposes raising or repealing the levy lid; however, if an increase in the levy lid were adopted by the Legislature, WSSDA supports requiring that levy equalization be fully funded and a commensurate increase in levy equalization be included.

(Adopted 1994; Amended 1999, 2005 and 2010)

7.1.23 Grandfathered Inequities

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that removes grandfathered inequities in K-12 education levy lids. (Adopted 2014)

16. 7.3.3 Bargaining/Negotiations

Recommendation: DO PASS AS AMENDED

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which would exclude the following from being negotiated in school district's collective bargaining agreements:

- Health benefits
- School calendar

ARGUMENT FOR THE AMENDMENT:

Since the original 7.3.3. and 7.6.5 were similar in the goal to exclude certain provisions as part of collective bargaining agreements, the Legislative Committee is proposing to combine them to reduce redundancy among Standing Legislative Positions. In the next round of voting, you will be asked to eliminate 7.6.5.

ORIGINAL SLP Wording:

7.3.3 Exclude School Calendar from Mandatory Negotiations

WSSDA believes that the school calendar is a matter of public concern and should not be a mandatory subject of collective bargaining.

(Adopted 1979; Amended 2001)

7.6.5 Health Care Bargaining

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which would exclude funding of health benefits from being negotiated in school district's collective bargaining agreements.
(Adopted 2010)

17. 7.3.2 School Year

Recommendation: DO PASS AS AMENDED

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which provides more academic time for students, in the following manner:

- Provide for summer school programs;
- Substantially increase the length of the students' school year; and
- Provide financial flexibility and incentives for local districts to operate a modified school calendar, which may include year-round instruction in any or all of their school buildings.

ARGUMENT FOR THE AMENDMENT:

The intent of this position is on learning time for students. This amendment removes the portion of the original 7.3.2 related to staff training and planning time due to its redundancy with wording in the professional development SLP (7.1.26).

ORIGINAL SLP Wording:

7.3.2 School Year

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which provides state-funded training and planning time for staff and more academic time for students, in the following manner:

- Provide for summer school programs;
- Substantially increase the length of the students' school year;
- Assure that staff has planning and in-service time in excess of the students' calendar year; and
- Provide financial flexibility and incentives for local districts to operate year-round instruction in any or all of their school buildings.

(Adopted 1988; Amended 1990, 1992 and 2005)

18. 7.1.26 Professional Development

Recommendation: DO PASS AS AMENDED

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that fully funds time and training costs a minimum of 80 hours of annual district-directed or approved professional development, collaboration outside the school day, and classroom preparation time (with an additional 16 hours of cultural competency and equity education, for a total minimum of 96 hours) for each certificated classroom teacher in Washington State. This professional development will align with the adopted state definition of professional learning pursuant to HB 1345 (2016).

ARGUMENT FOR THE AMENDMENT:

SLP 7.1.26 was adopted in 2015 and was ranked 13th by the 2015 Legislative Assembly. An additional legislative position was proposed in 2015 related to state funding for professional development. It was ranked 6th by the 2015 Legislative Assembly. In addition, the Legislature formally adopted HB 1345 during the 2016 session that establishes a statewide definition of professional learning that includes many of the interests expressed in both SLP 7.1.26 and the 2015 professional development position.

In an effort to reduce redundancy, the Legislative Committee is proposing to combine the two positions into an amended 7.1.26.

ORIGINAL SLP Wording:

7.1.26 Professional Development

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that fully funds time and training costs for up to 80 hours of annual district directed/approved professional development and classroom preparation time for each certificated classroom teacher in Washington State. (Adopted 2015)

19. 7.1.28 Truancy Becca Funding

Recommendation: DO PASS AS AMENDED

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that (1) provides adequate state funding to school districts for community truancy boards, for additional secretarial and administrative time to monitor truanancies, send letters, prepare court documents and truancy petitions, attend court hearings, provide follow-up supervision for Becca compliance, and for other efforts to decrease student absences; or (2) eliminates the Becca law and truancy board requirements if the funding is not continually forthcoming.

ARGUMENT FOR THE AMENDMENT:

Washington State's truancy law, known as the Becca Bill, requires schools, districts and the juvenile court to take specific actions when students are truant. For instance, schools must file a truancy petition with the Juvenile Court when a child has more than five unexcused absences in a month or ten in a school year. School secretaries and administrators spend countless hours filing petitions with the juvenile court and making court appearances. The courts are overflowing and judges often issue rulings that are little more than ordering a student to attend school, without meaningful interventions to address underlying issues.

Programs such as Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) are far more valuable in addressing behaviors and issues impairing students' ability to attend school, than the Becca Bill as it is currently administered. Early intervention with students and families who have unexcused absences are more productive than filing petitions for court action. If school districts were funded for PBIS and other intervention programs, instead of being legally bound to file endless court petitions, local districts would find and implement programs and services that work for their students and community.

ORIGINAL SLP Wording:

7.1.28 Truancy Becca Funding

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that: (1) provides adequate state compensation to school districts for additional secretarial and administrative time to monitor truanancies, send letters, prepare court documents and truancy petitions, attend court hearings and provide follow-up supervision for Becca compliance; or (2) eliminate the Becca law if the funding is not continually forthcoming.

20. 7.7.1 Tax Reform

Recommendation: DO PASS AS AMENDED

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation to implement a comprehensive, attainable, stable and sustainable funding plan for education in Washington State. WSSDA shall support legislation to restructure the Washington State tax system to establish a stable, broad-based, flexible source of revenue for the State of Washington which is equitable and adequate, in order to ensure better educational funding as well as to provide other essential state services.

ARGUMENT FOR THE AMENDMENT:

In order to reduce redundancy among Standing Legislative Positions; the Legislative Committee combined two current SLPs into one by amending 7.7.1. In the next round of voting, you will be asked to eliminate 7.1.25.

ORIGINAL SLP Wording:

7.1.25 Sustainable Revenue for Education Funding

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation to implement a comprehensive, attainable, stable and sustainable funding plan for education in Washington State. (Adopted 2014)

7.7.1 Tax Reform

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation to restructure the Washington State tax system to establish a stable, broad-based, flexible source of revenue for the State of Washington which is equitable and adequate, in order to ensure better educational funding as well as to provide other essential state services. (Adopted 1989; Amended 2013)

Part Three: Eliminations of Standing Legislative Positions

Part three considers eliminations of existing SLPs. Article IX, Section 6, B-3 of WSSDA's by-laws directs the Legislative Committee to review about 20% of the association's Standing Legislative Positions for possible updates through amendment or elimination. Districts may also propose amendments or eliminations.

21. 7.1.23 Grandfathered Inequities

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that removes grandfathered inequities in K-12 education levy lids. (Adopted 2014)

ARGUMENT FOR ELIMINATION:

In order to reduce redundancy among Standing Legislative Positions; the Legislative Committee combined two current SLPs into one by amending 7.1.1. In the last round of voting, you were asked to approve that amendment. This proposal would eliminate the redundant SLP.

22. 7.6.5 Health Care Bargaining

Recommendation: DO PASS Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which would exclude funding of health benefits from being negotiated in school district's collective bargaining agreements.
(Adopted 2010)

ARGUMENT FOR ELIMINATION:

In order to reduce redundancy among Standing Legislative Positions; the Legislative Committee combined two current SLPs into one by amending 7.3.3. In the last round of voting, you were asked to approve that amendment. This proposal would eliminate the redundant SLP.

23. 7.1.25 Sustainable Revenue for Education Funding

Recommendation: DO PASS Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation to implement a comprehensive, attainable, stable and sustainable funding plan for education in Washington State.
(Adopted 2014)

ARGUMENT FOR ELIMINATION

In order to reduce redundancy among Standing Legislative Positions; the Legislative Committee combined two current SLPs into one by amending 7.7.1. In the last round of voting, you were asked to approve that amendment. This proposal would eliminate the redundant SLP.

Part Four: Amendment of an SLP to Create a Separate SLP

24. 7.1.29 McKinney – Vento Homeless Assistance Act Funding

Note: This SLP is listed out of order so that it may be considered with the first proposal on the Regular Calendar that follows it.

Recommendation: DO PASS Submitted by: Legislative Committee

WSSDA supports state and federal funding of recognized costs associated with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.

ARGUMENT FOR THE AMENDMENT: The focus of SLP 7.1.6 is on the support and resources needed for special education programs. On review, the Legislative Committee determined that the original SLP 7.1.6 included language on support for homeless youth that was inconsistent with this focus. This amendment simply removes the bullet related to support for homeless youth in the original SLP and makes it its own, stand-alone SLP. Since the wording has been approved on numerous occasions by the Assembly, it was determined allowable for it to maintain its SLP status under a new title and number.

Original SLP Wording:

7.1.6 Special Education and Special Needs Students

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which requires full funding for special education programs and services. Such programs and services should maximize assistance to children rather than to their various categorizations and assessments. Any state funding formula shall:

- recognize that costs will vary according to the needs of every child and, therefore, for every district, based upon the IEP of each student;
- provide adequate funding for all of the required services for eligible special education students without imposing an artificial cap;
- exclude students for whom districts do not receive an annual basic education allocation from any special education program enrollment funding caps; and,
- recognize that any funding formula based upon the assumption that every district has the same budget percentage costs for special education is inherently flawed and will not work.
- support state and federal funding of recognized costs associated with the McKinney Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act.

(Adopted 1988; Amended 1990, 1996, 2005, 2014, and 2015)

Regular Calendar

The Regular Calendar includes positions put forward by school districts or the Legislative Committee for consideration by the Assembly for WSSDA's legislative agenda for 2016.

Note: This position should be considered with the last SLP above.

25. Funding for McKinney-Vento (Homeless) Students

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Tukwila, Federal Way, Yakima, Quincy,
Kent, Highline, and Auburn School Districts

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that supports the state fully funding school districts to cover the costs of supporting McKinney-Vento students.

ARGUMENT FOR:

School districts throughout the state currently spend millions of dollars providing transportation, and basic social services to these students. Transportation costs are incurred when McKinney-Vento students are in temporary living conditions that are not on normal district transportation routes. The federal government provides a yearly grant of about \$950,000 to the state to support McKinney-Vento students. This provides support to only 24 districts throughout the state. OSPI's latest count of students eligible for McKinney-Vento services is over 32,000 and growing. Thus the federal government support would be about \$30 per student, which is nowhere near enough to cover the costs. For example, in Tukwila, for student identification, transportation and very basic social services, the costs are about \$1,000 per student per year. This position advocates for holding the state accountable for adequately funding basic support for McKinney-Vento students and providing more resources to local school boards to address local academic needs.

LEARNING

26. Alternative Assessments for High School Graduation Requirements & Accountability

Recommendation: DO NOT PASS

Submitted by: Spokane School District

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that allows individual school districts to utilize the SAT and the ACT assessments for high school students to earn the certificate of academic achievement for graduation purposes and to meet the federal and state school accountability requirements at high school.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Local districts should have maximum flexibility to choose the manner in which high school students are evaluated. SAT and ACT are rigorous and reliable, provide access to post-secondary opportunities, and do not force educators to "teach to the test." Both tests are highly reliable and are recognized across the country: the SAT has updated its content to align with the Common Core State Standards and the ACT has substantively increased its rigor. In August 2016 Washington's State Board of Education adopted equivalent cut-scores for both assessments as graduation alternative assessments that correlate with the threshold scores for the Smarter Balanced Assessments in English language arts and mathematics. In addition, several states have sought approval from the US Department of Education to utilize the SAT and/or ACT for federal accountability purposes and some have already been granted permission. The current testing regime can be onerous for students, teachers and districts, especially lost instructional time that is currently dedicated to the logistical challenges posed by Smarter Balanced assessment coordination. This proposal does not dictate what each district should do; rather it mirrors the direction of many other states to ensure local governance to determine the best evaluation system to meet the varied needs of their respective student populations.

ARGUMENT AGAINST:

There is already too much confusion over state and district testing options in our state. This proposal would add to this confusion by expanding the current option of the SAT and/or ACT as alternative assessments for graduation purposes, to also apply to state and federal accountability at the high school level – as determined by local school districts. Students, districts, and the state would then have to navigate different assessments at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, depending on their district, causing more confusion. The Smarter Balanced system has been developed with deep attention to equity and access for every student to successfully participate in the assessments. There is a wide variety of accommodations available allowing for fair access for students. The state has purchased the full suite of Smarter Balanced assessments and teacher resources for use by districts across the school year, in addition to the annual summative assessments. While the SAT and ACT tests support measuring students' knowledge and skills for college entrance purposes, the tests are not created with the full spectrum of equity and access to accommodations in mind. In addition, there would likely be additional costs associated with the transition to different assessments in high school. Keeping the current policy of the SAT and ACT as alternative assessment options for students not meeting standard on the Smarter Balanced high school assessments avoids more testing confusion.

27. Academic Rigor and Equity in Public Education

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA supports legislation and funding for innovative and equitable solutions to enable students across the state to obtain the 24-credit graduation requirement and be prepared for college and career. The essential component is to provide additional opportunities to access rigorous coursework, including rigorous transition classes during the senior year. This should be available to all students in Washington.

ARGUMENT FOR:

This proposal addresses equity in academic success for every student. It permits school districts across the state to build capacity for students in the class of 2019 and beyond to meet the 24-credit graduation requirement and supports the vision that every child in the state will graduate on time, earn a meaningful diploma, and be ready for college and career. In 2014 the State Legislature provided funding enhancements for districts to more effectively support the move toward the 24-credits for every student. This type of action is critical to allow for students to have greater access to credit options that will result in increased on-time graduation rates.

28. English Language Learners

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA supports legislation that ensures English Language Learner (ELL) students have equal access to quality public schools and instruction. This includes but is not limited to:

- Creating a grant program for school districts to implement dual language programs for ELL and native English speaking students.
- Supporting school districts with certificated staff working in classrooms with ELL students to add to their highly qualified status by completing a certificated ELL or Bilingual endorsement.
- Including language acquisition coursework and multicultural competency training as part of the core requirements of teacher education programs.
- Developing academic language interim assessment tools to measure growth toward mastery of English Language Development Standards, in addition to the state's annual measures of progress in academic English language learning.
- Continuing the instructional hour increases and accompanying funding for the Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Over 96,000 English Language Learner (ELL) students are enrolled in the Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program, comprising 8.5 percent of the student population, and the number continues to grow. It is essential that districts have the resources and educators have the training needed to address educational challenges of ELL students. This position supports making intentional progress on many of the current challenges associated with equitable support to ELL students.

29. Expanding Access to and Equitable Funding for all Dual Credit Options

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that provides a stable and equitable funding system for all of Washington's Dual Credit options. Every student who chooses to take a dual credit option should have all of the costs (tuition, books, fees & transportation) paid for as is the case for students who choose to take classes solely through their public high school. The dual credit funding should apply, but not be limited to, classes taken through the AP/IB/Cambridge systems, Running Start, Tech Prep, College in the High School, on-line college coursework and participating classes at our state's Skill Centers.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Under our current funding system, there is a lack of equity in funding of all dual credit options (AP/IB/Cambridge/Running Start/College in the High School/Tech Prep). With all of these programs, unless the school district chooses to pay for the transportation and other unpaid costs not covered by the state, students and families are held responsible for some part of the costs associated with participation. This makes for an unfair and inaccessible system for many students who could benefit the most from the programs. This position advocates for a stable and equitable funding source for all districts that provide dual credit options to their students.

30. K-8 World Language Instruction

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that promotes innovative models and/or opportunities for world language instruction in kindergarten through eighth grades.

ARGUMENT FOR:

While state-funded full-day kindergarten programs are required to provide “experiences” for students in a world language other than English (per RCW 28A.150.315), this requirement is implemented to varying levels of fidelity across the state. Language *instruction* is not required until high school as part of the 24 credits required for graduation. In an increasingly global world, it is critical that students have support throughout their K-12 experience to build their skills in languages other than English.

31. A more clearly defined, online High School and Beyond Plan for Every Student

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Tumwater School District

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that clarifies the minimum required components of a High School and Beyond Plan. Inherent in this clarification will be encouragement for the development of, and free access to, an online HSBP that can be used as the framework for documenting students’ personalized pathway decisions and for providing career and college readiness curriculum to all students.

ARGUMENT FOR:

All school directors and school districts seek to improve graduation rates and decrease the opportunity and achievement gaps. Requiring the same minimum components of a High School and Beyond Plan will ensure all students are receiving the same guidance in exploring and establishing their personalized pathways. Additionally, the development of a FREE (to districts), individualized, dynamic, on-line career and college readiness website as a framework for every students’ HSBP would provide students with up-to-date, relevant information on how to maximize their educational experience and make appropriate, informed choices regarding the post-high school option that is the best fit for them. The increased relevancy of their education will increase student engagement and matriculation to technical, community and baccalaureate colleges, and reduce the dropout rate.

32. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Behavioral Support for Students

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Bellevue School District

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall Initiate and/or support legislation and funding for Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and behavioral support for P-12.

ARGUMENT FOR:

In addition to the knowledge and skills embedded in state learning standards for every student to learn, it is critical that students have access to learning that promotes student acquisition and application of the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions. Social Emotional Learning (SEL) has shown evidence of positive results for students in demonstrating greater readiness to access challenging academic subjects and the state is in the process of identifying a common set of SEL benchmarks. High quality SEL ensures positive learning environments and school climate; and provides a foundation for better academic performance as reflected in positive social behavior/peer relationships, fewer disciplinary issues, and less emotional distress. This position focuses on student learning and instructional support for teachers by assuring that there is sufficient funding and support to implement the SEL benchmarks.

33. Streamlining Summative Assessments

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which would establish a working committee with representation including a broad spectrum of education stakeholders, students, and school directors to review the summative state assessment process and make suggestions to improve the process so that it is more focused, more balanced on the skills necessary for success, more supportive of effective educational environments and less time intensive.

ARGUMENT FOR:

WSSDA believes that it important to collect summative data to assess educational effectiveness; and that assessments should be balanced across hard skills such as math, English language arts and science, as well as soft skills such as creativity, innovation, collaboration, and communication. Currently, the amount of time statewide testing is taking from student instructional hours is excessive and does not return enough value for the time taken. While Smarter Balanced Assessments provide the right foundation for gathering this information, they need to be reviewed and condensed for greater efficiency in the time needed to administer the assessments.

34. Student Assessment Bill of Rights

Recommendation: DO NOT PASS Submitted by: Onion Creek School District
Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation to create a Student Assessment Bill of Rights in which a student can be excused from taking statewide summative assessments at the request of the student's parent or guardian that aims to ensure that every student and parent in Washington has access to information about how to exercise their right to determine if statewide standardized assessments are in the best interest of their child.

ARGUMENT FOR:

In spring 2015 over 675,000 parents opted their child out of taking federally mandated tests. ESSA admits that parents have this right, but warns that if more than 5% exercise it, schools can expect to lose federal Title I money. This puts schools in the unacceptable position of urging parents to forego their rights. There are many reasons parents choose to opt their child out, including protesting the fed's overuse of standardized testing. Our state must reclaim its rightful power around policies governing high-stakes tests. This position supports creating a student assessment bill of rights takes a stand against this untenable situation by codifying these parents' rights.

ARGUMENT AGAINST:

This position does not seem necessary in that, parents already have the option to request that their students do not take state-mandated assessments (aka "opt out"). In addition, In addition to this redundancy, there is concern about how increasing numbers of students refusing to take the test will impact federal funding eligibility, given the 95% participation requirement under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). While ESSA may have some flexibility, it is likely there will still be a participation expectation for states to meet. Finally, there is concern that having more students opt out of high school assessments currently required for graduation will make high school graduation an even more challenging prospect.

TEACHING

35. Attract and Retain High Quality Staff in Hard-to-staff Schools

Recommendation: DO PASS Submitted by: Legislative Committee
Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that encourages equity across the state through incentives structured to enhance the ability of small, property-poor, or hard-to-staff districts to attract and retain staff.

ARGUMENT FOR:

It is the paramount duty of the state to ensure an education for every child in the state. But some districts, especially small or less affluent districts, have a much harder time attracting and retaining high quality staff. An unstable staff prevents cohesiveness and continuity for students. Consistency in staffing leads to team building and linear growth for staff and students alike.

36. Encouraging Diverse Students to Pursue the Teaching Profession

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that proactively promotes and encourages opportunities for students of color, bilingual students, and/or students from diverse backgrounds to explore the teaching profession when they are in high school.

ARGUMENT FOR:

There is currently a shortage in our state and across the nation with individuals seeking out the teaching profession. While some students may have opportunities through “career days” and/or Career and Technical Education (CTE) pathways to explore post-high school career options, including teaching, this access is inconsistent, especially for students from diverse backgrounds. A student’s language, color, socio-economic background, or lack of enrollment in a CTE pathway should not limit the opportunities they are offered, especially with regard to encouraging them to pursue the teaching profession. This position supports greater access and equity for promoting the teaching profession as an option for students currently enrolled in the K-12 public education system, and should be included in post-high school planning for every student.

37. Increase Teacher Contract Hours

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA supports legislation that increases the number of contract hours in the certificated teacher state-wide salary schedule in order to align with an increase in certificated teacher salaries.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Competitive salaries are important in order to attract and retain qualified and capable teachers. An important consideration in salaries is the hours worked for the salary received. While it is generally recognized that many teachers put in more than the required contract hours, the state-wide certificated teacher salary scale is based on a 1260 hour work year (180 days x 7 hours/day). Typical professional salaries are based on a 2080 hour work year (52 weeks x 40 hours/week). Increasing the number of contract hours for certificated teachers would bring the number of hours worked more in line with other professionals and would provide additional justification for increasing certificated teacher salaries.

38. Opposition to Strikes by School Employees

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA supports legislation to clarify that RCW 41.56.120 applies to all public school employees, including certificated personnel, and to mandate courts to assess and enforce a civil fine against the local education association for each strike, work stoppage or slowdown endorsed by the association or in which any members of the association engage or participate.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Students, community members, parents and school directors are frustrated and inconvenienced by school employee strikes. WSSDA has a long-standing position against strikes as a means of settling labor disputes but, as evidenced by events in the spring of 2015, strikes continue. One reason teacher strikes occur is that unions can tell members that a strike will have no negative affect on employee pay or benefits, and that it will not result in any fine for the union. This proposal mandates that courts assess and enforce a civil fine, providing a disincentive for unions to use strikes, work stoppages or slowdowns to accomplish economic or political goals.

39. Regional Collaboration of Choice/Magnet Programs

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that addresses the resource challenges faced by districts in providing their students access to choice/magnet programs. To ensure equitable access to educational opportunities for all students in Washington, and to avoid duplication, the state will incentivize regional cooperation by providing operating and capital costs, and student transportation between districts when they share programs of choice/magnets within their Education Service District boundaries.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Not all districts have the capacity and/or resources to provide extensive choice/magnet programs. State regional cooperation incentives for equal access to these programs currently are too narrow. Two exemplars: the state incentive for regional districts' cooperation for Skill Centers and Higher Ed, and district pilots of the Collaborative School for Innovation and Success program.

40. Recruit and Retain Diverse Teachers

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation and initiatives that promote innovative and intentional strategies to prepare, recruit, and retain teachers from diverse backgrounds that better reflect the student populations that they serve.

ARGUMENT FOR:

There is currently a shortage in our state and across the nation with individuals seeking out the teaching profession, especially individuals from diverse backgrounds and/or individuals of color. In addition, the demographic profile of classroom teachers does not reflect that of the student populations served. For example, in the 2015-16 school year, the percentage of non-white students attending public schools was 43.9 percent, while the percentage of non-white classroom teachers was only 10.2 percent. This position advocates for innovation and proactive strategies to work outside of the box to invite individuals from diverse backgrounds and people of color to enter the teaching profession.

41. Teacher Shortages

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Yakima

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA supports Legislation and/or policies that remove barriers which are furthering teacher shortages and preventing districts from hiring highly effective teachers, especially those who have graduated from out of state college/university teacher preparation programs. Barrier-busters could include:

- Promotion of state-to-state reciprocal agreements and elimination of additional testing for recent out of state graduates would significantly increase the pool of available teachers and reduce the teacher shortage.
- Creating state level incentives for teachers to consider hard-to-staff schools would help reduce the “bidding wars” that pit one district against others.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Washington State districts are in crisis, suffering with teacher shortages. As a result they must either use substitute teachers (which are also in short supply) or backfill with existing staff. A number of barriers have been identified that limit the ability of districts to be able to hire qualified teachers – not the least of which are that out-of-state teachers and newly graduated teachers must take (usually at their own cost) a Washington State Basic Skills Test and a PRAXIS test for each certification. Unless those out of state teachers have compelling reasons for moving to Washington, many choose to stay or go to other states that have reciprocal agreements where these additional tests aren't required. This position advocates for proactive progress toward alleviating some of the current challenges districts face with the teacher shortage.

42. WaKIDS Implementation

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2014

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that enacts the full recommendations of the WaKIDS Workgroup report released by OSPI in January 2013. Particular emphasis should be placed on enacting recommendations to:

- Provide for automatic waivers of conference time at the start of the year from the 180 day requirement;
- Provide “WaKIDS Implementation Grants” to cover the additional costs of completing the assessments;
- Continue to take steps to reduce the amount of time it takes for teachers to complete WaKIDS assessments; and
- Specifically allow schools to use strategies that involve school/district-based teams to support and assist classroom teachers in making the observations required under WaKIDS.

ARGUMENT FOR:

WaKIDS is a process for students entering full-day Kindergarten programs that should increase public confidence in public education, as it supports a smoother transition from home or early learning settings into kindergarten. It provides parents and teachers an opportunity to learn from each other to better support learning and school success. But all of this will happen only if WaKIDS is adequately funded to allow teachers time to process and enter the assessment data and additional time for parent meetings and early learning collaborations that are meaningful and useful. Implementation of WaKIDS requires significant teacher time, outside of class, that is currently allocated for other activities. Without adequate funding to continue to support new teachers (approximately 20% of Kindergarten teachers are new to WaKIDS each year), the vision of this process to inform and support strong transitions for students will not be realized.

GOVERNANCE

43. Non-renewal Process

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that changes the applicable provisions of RCW 28A.405 to provide for a practical and efficient system for the non-renewal of certificated staff who do not meet the new evaluation criteria as defined in 28A.405.100. Such a system would provide the following:

- That the statute not require the same timeline for or number of employee-supervisor conferences and fully completed evaluation documents during the established probationary period; and
- The administrative appeal process ends with a decision by the Board of Directors after providing the employee an opportunity to present his/her information. The employee retains the right to appeal to a judge.

ARGUMENT FOR:

During the probationary period, supervisors are required by law to meet with employees and provide a written evaluation every two weeks. This typically requires four to six observations, each lasting up to an hour. This is extremely time consuming for principals and results in redundant evaluations. Should the evaluations result in a decision not to renew an employee's contract, the appeal process is cumbersome and expensive. The process is structured like a regular court proceeding, with witnesses, discovery, and other legal standards that do not apply to performance non-renewal of most employees in other professions. While preserving employee due process, an appeal for non-renewal should consist of an informal grievance process to the Board of Directors, providing the employee an opportunity to present any information challenging the non-renewal documentation.

44. Oppose Restricting or Eliminating Non-Medical Vaccine Exemptions

Recommendation: DO NOT PASS Submitted by: Mt. Pleasant
Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA opposes legislation and/or policy that restricts or eliminates non-medical vaccine exemptions.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Since Washington first passed vaccine requirements in 1980 the schedule has grown from 5 to 26 injections (including 2 Chicken Pox shots) for daycare through High School attendance. While families are currently allowed to exempt their students from some vaccinations, most of the 4.1% K-12 exemption use is selective, avoiding a reactive booster or Chicken Pox or Hepatitis B. Washington exemption use is responsible, safe, and dropping. Eliminating non-medical exemptions would bar children missing just one injection from school. Creating a more stringent requirement would also cause families wishing to exempt their students from vaccines to exit the K-12 system. As a result, small districts will be harmed or closed by FTE losses. California recently eliminated exemptions resulting in widespread litigation, organized parent opposition, expensive parallel education tracks, and FTE losses. This position advocates for preventing any legislation that would require more stringent vaccine requirements for students.

ARGUMENT AGAINST:

Under current Washington Law, families are already permitted to exempt their students from vaccination requirements with the appropriate forms. Any future legislation would require consideration given current conditions of communicable disease impact on schools and student health.

45. School Board Compensation

Recommendation: DO NOT PASS Submitted by: Stanwood-Camano
Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation to establish and fund a program that compensates school board directors with a monthly stipend if they complete a series of training classes provided by WSSDA and continue to update their skill set.

ARGUMENT FOR:

This proposal advocates for dedicated funding for training and education of school board directors. We would not hire a teacher that does not have the necessary expertise in their craft. Therefore, school directors should also be held to the same standard and expectation for being well-trained and "up-to-date" on current trends in education. This proposal links that training to financial compensation to serve as an incentive that encourages school directors to receive the training necessary to do their jobs well. The present law regarding school director compensation is inconsistent as it relies on local decisions and funds for director compensation, and ultimately discriminates against districts that have limited resources. This proposal advocates that the Legislature establish (and fund) a program that compensates school board members with a monthly stipend IF they complete a series of training classes established by WSSDA AND continue to update their knowledge and skills.

ARGUMENT AGAINST:

All new funding to education needs to be focused on meeting the state’s basic education obligations. While training support for school directors is important, RCW 28A.343.400 already allows for boards of directors to receive compensation from local sources of up to fifty dollars per day (for a maximum of \$4,800) for attending board meetings and for performing other services on behalf of the school district. The decision as to whether or not to compensate directors currently resides with local school districts and many boards choose to waive this option. In addition, many school directors already have extensive experience in other elected offices or on nonprofit boards. Requiring a “one-size-fits-all” training mandate could be unnecessary for some directors and detrimental to encouraging citizens to run for their local school board. Advocating for new, dedicated state funding for director training will take the focus off of basic education and student learning and could be a barrier to new directors.

46. Statewide Bargaining for Salaries and Healthcare

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2015 Reintroduced/Amended in: 2016

WSSDA supports legislation that transfers authority for bargaining basic education salaries and healthcare benefits for classified, certified, and administrative school employees from local bargaining units to the state, and that retains local authority for bargaining of all non-basic education enhancements.

ARGUMENT FOR:

In order to achieve our state’s basic education learning goals, it is critical for school districts to focus on student learning and the state to focus on ample funding for basic education statewide. The current system of local bargaining for school employee salaries and healthcare is one of the most contentious personnel issues in our schools and one that is wrought with inequities within communities and across the state. This position supports the state’s clear role and authority for bargaining the necessary salaries and healthcare benefits in the hopes of resulting in a statewide economy of scale and efficiencies related to both areas of bargaining. This position also advocates for continued local bargaining to take place for non-basic education enhancements, thus recognizing the continuing need for local communities to guide important investments in education based on local priorities.

47. Streamlining Reporting

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA supports legislation that directs education agencies to review education data reporting for effectiveness and reduced cost of acquisition.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Streamlining and simplifying data reporting will allow districts to use resources more efficiently and effectively. Data collection and analysis will take less time and be more accurate. Especially for Alternative Learning Environments and Special Education teachers, the time required for reporting is excessive. For districts, the numerous reports and platforms needed for those reports is also excessive. Taking a hard look at the reports and the systems used would enable significant consolidation and simplification. If state and federal agencies consolidate and simplify reporting, the money saved could be used to add resources for instruction.

48. Public Record Requests

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA supports legislation that includes a reasonable charge for requests for electronic copies of public records, a method for collecting a reasonable deposit for any size records request, and a process for determining when public record requests are frivolous or harassing.

ARGUMENT FOR:

The Public Records Act (PRA) safeguards access to public information and enhances confidence in school management and student learning. The PRA, passed before computers were indispensable to the world we live in, allows a reasonable charge for providing paper copies of public records, but is silent about electronic copies. Currently, most public records requests are for electronic files. The vast majority of requests are specific, reasonable, and easily filled. However, a growing number of requests are so large they place an unreasonable financial burden on districts and undermine their paramount duty to educate students. This position is meant to address this growing challenge for school districts.

FUNDING AND ALLOCATIONS

STATE FUNDING, APPORTIONMENT, AND LEVIES:

49. Compensation Technical Working Group Recommendations

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2014

WSSDA supports legislation that implements the recommendations of the Compensation Technical Working Group submitted to the Legislature in June 2012.

ARGUMENT FOR:

In 2010 ESHB 2261 created the Compensation Technical Working Group (CTWG) that was comprised of a broad base of experts in the area of compensation and funding. The CTWG offered nine recommendations in 2012 based on thorough research within Washington and nationally. The recommendations addressed areas ranging from beginning teacher salaries; a consistent and fair statewide base salary structure for K-12 employees that recognizes needed progression through a career continuum; support for educator development through time for teacher professional development and mentors / instructional coaches; and parameters for the ample funding of basic and non-basic education salary allocations. This position is a critical roadmap for ensuring the state fulfill its obligation for fully funding employee compensation

50. Hold Harmless While the State Transitions from Levy to State Funding

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Spokane and Highline School Districts

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation which will ensure – during the State’s transition to full funding of educator compensation – no school district loses the funding necessary to maintain current compensation obligations. Levy amounts should only decrease to the extent that the state has fulfilled its responsibility to fund compensation. Districts should be held harmless to ensure that total funding is maintained or enhanced at the greater of the current aggregate or per pupil amounts increased annually by the Seattle CPI.

ARGUMENT FOR:

The legislature will be making significant decisions regarding the use of local levy funds and state funding for compensation related to basic education activities during the 2017 session. It is critical that the legislature ensures that these decisions enhance the ability of school districts to meet the needs of all students and not create situations where districts go backwards in terms of funding and services. It is increasingly clear that the Legislature may not meet its responsibility to amply fund educator compensation by the required deadline of the 2017-18 school year (per ESHB 2261 and the McCleary court decision).

This proposal would ensure that the legislature only reduce local funding to the extent they have provided funding for compensation – and that districts would be entitled to a hold harmless provision during the transition period. School districts need the assurance that, through the transition process to full and ample state funding for basic education compensation, they can rely on the combination of state and local funding necessary to meet the requirements of their negotiated agreements.

Every district will be impacted uniquely by legislative decisions, depending on their current size, funding levels, negotiated agreements, and local education delivery decisions. This uniqueness will create challenges as the legislature grapples with creating a consistent funding system for compensation – making a hold harmless provision critical during the implementation phase so that districts can rely on the combination of state and local funding necessary to meet the requirements of their

negotiated agreements. This proposal is intended to limit the negative impacts a district would face during the transition to a new funding formula.

51. Levy Equalization Funding and Formulas

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Spokane School District

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that maintains or improves levy equalization for districts that receive Local Effort Assistance. Any change in the levy formula that occurs as a result of levy/compensation reform shall include an equalization factor to mitigate differences in local funding capability. That factor shall assure equity among districts at a rate equivalent to or higher than the current formula.

ARGUMENT FOR:

The state's paramount duty is to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders. This proposal promotes the concept that Local Effort Assistance (LEA) be adjusted to assure comparable per student funding for all schools and therefore comparable opportunity for all students to receive the best possible education. All school districts should be able to raise comparable per student funds from local levies for their schools with the only differences driven by categorical programs or small school funding included in the levy base.

Additional Information:

The 2016 Legislature adopted ESSB 6195 directing a legislative task force (the Education Funding Task Force (EFTF)) to develop recommendations on a variety of issues associated with funding basic education and meeting the state's paramount duty pursuant to *McCleary v. State*. Within the set of recommendations the EFTF is required to address is related to local maintenance and operation levies and LEA. If the state is unable to provide funding to eliminate school district dependency on local levies for implementation of the state's program of basic education, the EFTF is directed to introduce legislation that will extend current state levy policy for at least one calendar year (through the 2018 calendar year).

Two important actions the EFTF must take are to develop specific recommendations that would address issues related to; and establish legislation that would meet the state's obligation to provide state funding for competitive compensation to recruit and retain competent common school staff, while eliminating school district dependency on local levies for implementation of the state's program of basic education. If these goals are not met, the EFTF is directed to introduce legislation that will extend current state levy policy for at least one calendar year (through the 2018 calendar year).

52. Use of Levy Funds for Non-Basic Education Programs

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that allows levy funds to be used for non-basic education programs. School districts must account for non-basic education levy fund uses. Time for reporting, accounting, and auditing levy fund uses must be minimized and funding to cover costs of compliance included.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Current state law already prohibits the use of local levies for basic education obligations; however with the woeful underfunding of basic education from the state, districts have been forced to consider using local levy funding to support basic education obligations. While use of levy funding for non-basic education purposes has always been allowable, there has been limited effort to account for how levy funds are used for basic and/or non-basic education purposes. However, in the 2016 supplemental operating budget, the Washington State Legislature enacted a reporting requirement for school districts to begin reporting to OSPI in the 2016-17 school year the accounting of the fund sources used, including the use of local levies. This information will be used to support the state's transition to meet its obligation for providing state funding for basic education compensation and staffing and allow for school districts to utilize local levies for their intended use for providing enhancements to the solid program of basic education. This position encourages accurate reporting for use of levy dollars as sound fiscal practice and to build trust with taxpayers.

53. Per Pupil Inflation Formula

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Highline School District

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that would require levy funding authority to be adjusted by a per pupil inflator that is equal to the actual percentage increase in state and federal funds budgeted for local school districts on a per-pupil basis.

ARGUMENT FOR:

The Per Pupil Inflation, or PPI, is an estimate of the percentage increase in basic education funding the state is providing from one school year to the next. In the current state budget, this percentage is set at 1.09%. This percentage is used in the calculation of levy authority and levy equalization to ensure that it keeps pace with increasing state funding. Based on the approved supplementary budget, basic education funding increased by roughly 6.0% for this budget cycle. That difference means that levy and levy equalization calculations will not allow local school districts to collect levies that voters have already approved, which impacts the ability to maintain locally funded teachers and staff positions that are not replaced with the changes in calculation and already approved COLA (Cost of Living Adjustment) to locally funded staff. Simply put, the 1.09% amount does not come close to matching the 6.0% increase in state funding to offset the loss, and there needs to be a reasonable, formula based measure put in place to ensure that school districts affected can maintain a balanced budget.

Currently, the amount that is provided for PPI is based on budget negotiations that were held in Olympia to reach a balanced budget and do not have a true bearing on the cost of education for districts that are affected by and require the per pupil inflator. This level was an arbitrary figure designed not to match education funding growth but to "back-in" to a total budget target amount to ensure a passable budget.

Even though this is not an issue that reaches deeply into the issues of education finance reform to find a path to fully funding basic education adequately for all students, it reflects the changes necessary and the issue of political gamesmanship that has influenced the budget for the State of Washington for years rather than sound financial planning and a formula driven solution. A formula-driven PPI would ensure a non-biased, non-political arrangement going forward to maintain district funding while the full and adequate funding for education is sought that will fully fund the fair market cost of compensation.

54. Fiscal Notes and Unfunded Mandates

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Spokane School District

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that requires all school district costs associated with legislation, including incidental, administrative and non-employee, to be identified with the source of funds to be used to implement the legislation. WSSDA supports requiring K-12 related legislation to have a null and void clause if state funding is not appropriated to implement the legislation, in accordance with the school district fiscal note.

ARGUMENT FOR:

When new legislation, or changes to existing legislation, are proposed, current state law provides that OSPI will produce a school district fiscal note where practicable. It is not required. In addition, there is no requirement that the legislature provide, or even identify the source of, the funding necessary to implement new legislation as identified in a fiscal note when one is produced. This has created significant unfunded mandates – where the local school board must determine what programs and services to reduce or eliminate to address new requirements.

The State Legislature continues to enact legislation that increases requirements and implements new obligations on local school districts. At the same time, they typically do not provide the funding necessary to implement these new requirements or fulfill the obligations. Districts are left to either reduce other services, or ask their local taxpayers for additional levy authority to meet these new expectations. This proposal is intended to prevent these continued unfunded mandates.

55. Federal Funding Multipliers

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Yakima and Tukwila School Districts

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA supports legislation requiring OSPI to apply any multiplier used by the federal government for determining poverty rates (when qualifying economically disadvantaged students for programs and services) to state-funded programs and services that target those disadvantaged students as well.

ARGUMENT FOR:

The federal government allows the use of “multipliers” under some circumstances if districts do not document the required percentage of low-income students needed to qualify for programs and services, including free or reduced-price meals and Title I funding. For instance, the federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows schools in low-income areas to qualify for free breakfast and lunch for all students, without

collecting family income information or individual applications. To determine eligibility, the CEP uses census data and information from other programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Temporary Assistance Program for Needy Families, and Medicaid.

The state should do the same. Instead, in 2014-15 OSPI required all schools and districts to conduct a Household Income Survey to determine poverty rates to qualify for state-funded programs including the Learning Assistance Program, National Board Certified Teacher bonuses, K-3 high-poverty funding, and full-day kindergarten funding. Because income forms are not required for free meals in CEP schools, there is little incentive for parents in those schools to return the Household Income Survey. This position advocates for WSSDA to work with the legislature and/or OSPI to explore ways to alleviate this burden for school districts and adjust any state rules or statutes that are in place preventing this practice from occurring.

56. Equity in Remediation Money

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA supports equalizing the delivery of remedial money for poverty programs by using state Learning Assistance Program dollars to close the gap in per student funding among Title I qualified students, created by differing Title I funding formulas.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Federal Title I funding is distributed using different formulas. Some school districts with a high percentage of poor students receive less for each qualified student than other districts with lower percentages of poor students. Students struggling with issues of poverty who are not receiving comparable services due to inequitable funding will, on average, receive less help and will be less competitive in student achievement. State Learning Assistance Program (LAP) funds should be used first to close the gap in funding created by federal Title I funding formulas. Then, remaining LAP dollars should be distributed as they are now.

57. Fully Fund Facilities for Mandated Class Size Reduction

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Spokane School District

Introduced in: 2015

WSSDA supports legislation to fully fund any and all mandated class size reduction. Funding will support property acquisition and facilities to provide the necessary classroom space.

ARGUMENT FOR:

With the currently required 60% majority required to pass school construction bonds, a growing number of districts are unable to access the matching funds needed to qualify to receive K-3 class-size reduction grants. This position advocates that the state fully fund any requirements related to class-size reduction mandates.

CONSTRUCTION AND TRANSPORTATION FUNDING:

58. State Sales Tax Offset Dedicated to a School Construction Fund

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that creates a new state account that would be funded in an amount equal to state sales taxes collected from school districts for construction project costs and to be used to provide capital construction funding for school districts.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Each year, school districts spend approximately \$1B in the State of Washington on goods and services in their General Fund alone. A large portion of that is on construction projects. Most of these expenditures are subject to state sales taxes. The largest source of construction funding is via local bond elections which means our local tax payers are paying for sales tax on any construction bond they passed and on the interest to service the bond. This is bad tax policy and needs to be addressed. Since it is not possible to exempt sales tax on school construction projects given that it is one of the reasons the state of Washington is able to charge sale tax to the federal government, this position would dedicate any state sales tax school districts pay to a special construction fund dedicated for school construction.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

1. This change will impact every school district in the state making it easier to access capital construction funds and lessening the impact to the tax payers in our school districts who are being taxed twice. By dedicating taxes paid into a school construction fund, communities won't have to pass bonds as often or for as much. Tax payers will know their tax for the bond tax is being used to support schools.
2. Districts face an extraordinary burden when they attempt to pass a bond measure which requires a 60% approval rating to pass. Many districts have not been able to do so and therefore have limited ability to access state funding for school construction that is "unlocked" with the passage of a bond. The funds in this dedicated account would be accessible regardless of the passage of a bond.
3. Sub-standard school buildings are present across Washington State. By dedicating the sales taxes paid by school districts into a fund for school construction, it will make it a bit easier to address that problem and give students the buildings needed for 21st Century learning.

STUDENT PROGRAMS / SERVICES:

59. Social-emotional and Behavioral Support for Students

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Spokane School District

Year Introduced: 2015

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation and funding for social-emotional and behavioral support services individualized to meet the needs of each student. The state will help every school build capacity for wrap-around services by enhancing the prototypical school funding formula for support service staffing to the national standard. Districts will have the flexibility to increase support personnel through local funding and grants.

ARGUMENT FOR:

To close the opportunity/achievement gap, success is dependent on meeting the social-emotional, behavioral, and academic needs of the every child. RCW 28A.150.260 defines the allocation of state funding to support the state's program of basic education, including providing guidance for staff funding and distribution formulas based on the prototypical school model. The prototypical model was updated in 2010 (SHB 2776) and 2014 (E2SSB 6552) to define new staff-to-student ratios for funding allocation purposes for all staffing positions. While districts receive funding based on the prototypical mode, final decisions on how to distribute the funding across staff positions remains a local decision. Specific to support service staff, for allocation purposes only, Washington's prototypical model allocates the following:

Washington State Model for Allocating Support Service Staff Positions (per RCW 28A.150.260)			
	Elementary (Grades K-6)	Middle (Grades 7-8)	High (Grades 9-12)
School nurses	.0076 FTE per 400 students	.060 FTE per 432 students	.096 FTE per 600 students
Social Workers	.042 FTE per 400 students	.006 FTE per 432 students	.015 FTE per 600 students
Psychologists	.017 per 400 students	.002 FTE per 432 students	.007 FTE per 600 students
Guidance Counselors	.493 per 400 students	1.116 FTE per 432 students	2.539 FTE per 600 students

In comparison to the national model for allocation of these important support positions, Washington's model is woefully insufficient:

National Best Practices Model for Allocating Education Support Service Staff Positions	
	Grades K-12
School nurses	1 FTE per building
Social Workers	1 FTE per 250 students
Psychologists	1 per 750 students
Guidance Counselors	1 per 250 students

This position advocates for increased funding and support to bring greater parity between the state and national staffing allocation models.

60. Ample State Funding for School Nurses, Social Workers, Counselors, and Psychologists

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Tukwila, Federal Way, Yakima, Quincy,
Kent, Highline, and Auburn School Districts
Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA supports legislation allocating ample funding for school nurses, social workers, counselors and psychologists to school districts based on student needs and aligned with national model recommendations.

ARGUMENT FOR:

Currently, the prototypical schools funding model (per RCW 28A.150.260) provides an allocation for school nurses, social workers, guidance counselors, and psychologists at a level for all schools that is insufficient based on actual student and school needs. For example, the current allocation for social workers in the prototypical middle school is 1 social worker per 72,000 students and is not based on any measure of student need. Allocations in the state prototypical school funding model for these positions should be aligned with national allocation recommendations and based on measures of student need.

61. Fund Transitional Bilingual Instruction Program (TBIP) (ELL) and Learning Assistance Program (LAP) Based on Student Need

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Tukwila, Federal Way, Yakima, Quincy,
Kent, and Highline School Districts
Introduced in: 2016

WSSDA supports legislation that allocates TBIP (ELL) and LAP (Learning Assistance Program) funds solely based on student need and not on staff mix.

ARGUMENT FOR:

WSSDA Permanent Position 3.1.4 and WSSDA Standing Legislative Position 7.1.5 call for the state basic education formulas to provide resources to close the achievement and opportunity gaps. As part of a plan to close these gaps, resources must be allocated based upon student need. Two state programs allocate resources to two groups of students that are on the low end of the achievement gaps. One is the TBIP (Transitional Bilingual Instructional Program) for English Language Learners (ELL). The other is LAP (Learning Assistance Program) for students who qualify for Free and Reduced Price Meals. Both of these programs are allocated on the basis of two factors: the number of students in the category and the staff mix of the district. Staff mix is a measure of the seniority and education level of the certificated staff in the district. The allocation formulas currently do not take into account concentrations of students in the category nor the academic level of the students. The implications of this allocation approach is that districts with higher concentrations and lower academic levels of these categories of students can get significantly less money per student than those districts with lower concentrations and higher academic levels. This position advocates for student need to be a greater consideration in funding formulas in the interest of greater equity for students across the state.

62. Technology Funding Stream

Recommendation: DO PASS

Submitted by: Legislative Committee

Introduced in: 2014

WSSDA shall initiate and/or support legislation that creates a specific technology funding stream for school projects specific to creating sufficient technology capacity to successfully administer the Smarter Balanced state assessments.

ARGUMENT FOR:

All districts will administer Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) tests. No student should be limited in their performance due to the technology available in their school. Without sufficient technology in every school, some students will struggle to complete the required SBAC tests.