

## 2009-2010 Top Five Issues and Supported Issues

### TOP FIVE PRIORITY ISSUES

- 1. Basic Education Funding:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that advance the Education Finance reform legislation, ESHB 2261, passed in 2009, and restore both the early learning component and the highly capable safety net to include:

  1. the formation of the Funding Working group report with recommendations due by December 1, 2009;
  2. the formation of the K-12 Data Governance Group with initial report due by November 5, 2009 and follow up by Sept. 1, 2010;
  3. the completion of the accountability proposal by the State Board of Education with report due by December 1, 2009;
  4. the completion of work charged to the Professional Educator Standards Board to address teacher standards and certification with initial recommendations due January, 1, 2010 and subsequent reports in 2011;
  5. the formation and preliminary report answering specified questions of the Quality Education Council by January 1, 2010;
  6. the addition of targeted early learning to the definition of basic education;
  7. the addition of a highly capable safety net process for districts that can demonstrate significant need.
  
- 2. Strengthening Math and Science Curriculum and Education:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that strengthen math and science education by 1) providing students access to curricula that has clear examples and explanations, aligns with the new WA math and science standards and national math panel recommendations which include a focused, coherent progression that emphasizes key topics to prepare students for success in authentic algebra and geometry and simultaneously develops conceptual understanding; computational fluency in basic number facts, standard algorithms, and fractions; and problem-solving skills. Parent involvement in all phases of math/science curriculum adoption is critical. 2) implementing initiatives to attract, train, and retain qualified math/science teachers 3) providing students who are able to excel in math/science opportunities to advance quickly.
  
- 3. Washington State Assessment System Improvements -** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that improve the Washington State Assessment System to make it more efficient and focused on student learning, while preserving high standards. This shall be accomplished by requiring the assessment system to 1) provide nationally comparable individual student progress data, 2) provide diagnostic assessments to determine student needs, 3) measure individual student growth in a manner that is reliable and valid, 4) provide results quickly so that they can be used to guide instruction during the current school year. The assessment system must also be cost and time efficient, while continuing to meet education testing requirements from the federal government.

4. **Support State Board of Education CORE 24 Framework** -The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that endorse the Core 24 framework proposed by the State Board of Education. This proposal is contingent upon the provision of adequate, sustainable, supplemental funding from the State.
5. **Support Rational Approaches to Teacher Compensation** - The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that advance the achievement of the stated goals of ESHB 2261 relating to teacher standards, certification and compensation to include:
  1. the completion of work charged to the Professional Educator Standards board to adopt performance standards for effective teaching and continuous student improvement, calibrated for each level of certification and along the entire continuum; to continue work on the Professional Certification assessments; to develop a definition of master teacher that includes teachers with National Board certification; to recommend a proposal for a classroom-based means of evaluating student-teacher effectiveness which includes multiple measures of performance;
  2. the formation of the Compensation work group by the Office of Financial Management in July, 2011 to recommend the details of an enhanced salary allocation model that aligns educator development and certification with compensation.

**SUPPORTED ISSUES:**

6. **Creating a School Safety Zone** -The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that increase the penalties for felony or registered crimes committed against children within school district designated walking zones , and within 100 feet of bus stops. Crimes to include Luring, Stalking, Communication with a Minor for Immoral Purposes, Indecent Exposure with Sexual Intent to a Minor, and all sex crimes or violent crimes.
7. **Autism Insurance Parity** - The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that phase in health insurance coverage for the diagnosis and treatment of autism spectrum disorders.
8. **School Emergency Preparedness** - The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that that strengthen the level of emergency preparedness in our schools by requiring hands-on emergency training for staff members, as well as providing clear guidelines requiring schools to have on hand emergency supplies and equipment, as recommended by the American Red Cross, FEMA, and other state and national Emergency Management experts. Such legislation must include the funding necessary for schools to meet these requirements. Funding for training and emergency supplies and equipment must be included.
9. **School Traffic Safety** - The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that mandate the creation of posted school speed zones on any highway, road, or street adjacent to a public school and shall require counties and incorporated cities/towns to post standardized advance warning signs that must include the word "School". In addition, local government, not public school districts shall be required to pay for the installation and maintenance of traffic safety devices for school zones.

10. **Training for School Nurses** - The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that seek to provide state funding for regional training and support for school nurses through the regional Educational Service District and School Nurse Corps infra- structure. School nurses have to practice independently in non-medical settings. The practice is unique and complex. New school nurses need specific orientation and mentoring to quickly and competently practice in schools. With the rapidity of change in school health services, all school nurses across Washington State need ongoing training and support.
11. **Firearm Violence Prevention** - The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that promote the safe storage of firearms to help curb unsupervised access to firearms by children or adolescents and encourage firearm violence prevention in school health programs.
12. **Conditional Scholarships** - The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that provide links between state conditional college scholarships and loan repayment with federal conditional scholarship and loan repayment programs. Both programs provide scholarship and loan repayment in exchange of teaching service in Washington State’s public K-12 schools in high-need areas – including high-need areas of teaching, such as special education, math, science and teachers with bilingual abilities and high-need districts of the state. These two programs should be linked to maximize the benefit of state dollars.
13. **Music and Arts Education** - Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that ensure that every child in Washington State has access to music and other arts as part of a balanced education addressing the whole child and preparing them for the critical thinking necessary for success in the work force, to include, but not be limited to:
  1. comprehensive, sequential music education taught by qualified instructors, recognizing music as the basis for providing all students with substantive education in the arts;
  2. programs in music and the other arts that include rigorous instruction, progress monitoring, meaningful assessment, and accountability to school officials, parents, and the community.
14. **Increase Funding and Support for Highly Capable Students** - The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that
  1. increase funding to provide for both identification and delivery of Highly Capable services for at least 3% of district enrollment.
  2. ensure that districts are enabled to make decisions about their Highly Capable services in K-12.
  3. ensure that small districts receive assistance to provide services.
  4. amend Section 403 of ESHB 2261 to add Highly Capable professional development. Content for this training shall align with core curriculum required for Gifted Education specialty endorsement.