

Washington State PTA Legislative Update February 17, 2008

Welcome to the 5th edition of the Grassroots Connection for the 2008 Legislative Session! Each Grassroots connection provides you with a brief recap of last week's events and a preview of the next week. As a reminder, Washington State PTA's top 5 legislative priorities are:

1. K-12 Education Funding
2. Math and Science Education
3. Quality Teaching
4. Student Support Services
5. Special Education Funding

Last week in Olympia

2/12 - Deadline for bills to pass out of fiscal committee in the house of origin. In the House, this is called the Appropriations Committee. In the Senate it is the Ways and Means Committee. Bills that have passed out have moved to the Rules Committee, where they can be scheduled for floor action. Many bills of interest did make this cut-off. There is a bill update for our top priorities later in this report.

2/13 - WSPTA Focus Day. I don't have exact #s yet, but Focus Day was very well attended; we overflowed the capacity of the Columbia Room in the main Legislative Building. Of note, many more children attended than in the past. This is a positive trend! The work of the Basic Education Finance Task Force, which is in the process of redefining the basic education funding formulas, was the main focus of our event. Several members of the task force including Rep. Ross Hunter, Rep. Skip Priest, Sen. Rodney Tom and Sen. Joe McDermott provided updates. (Our PTA ♥ BEF stickers had lasting effect as Sen. Tom wore his throughout both that day and the next; it was also visible on TVW.) Governor Christine Gregoire was also a main draw. She spoke to her commitment to strengthening education, which is seen as essential for our state to fully participate in the 21st century economy. Others will be providing more complete Focus Day reports in the coming week. An online evaluation will also be emailed to participants this week.

2/13 – Began a week of floor action for bills. All 49 of our State Senators are in the Senate Chamber; and all 98 of our State Representatives are in the House Chamber. Their job now is deciding whether to vote YES, NO, or amend key bills. Visitors can view floor action from the gallery on the floor above or watch the proceedings on TVW. Of note, some of our members pulled their legislators from the floor during PTA Focus Day to have a brief visit. Those I spoke with were amazed at how well this worked; many legislators responded and showed just how accessible they are to their constituents.

2/15 – New Revenue Forecast was issued – There is still some money, but less than originally projected will be available for the Supplemental Budget.

Revenue for the current budget period, 2007–09, is projected to decrease \$423 million from the previous forecast. The revised forecast leaves \$524 million in non-obligated General Fund revenue for 2007–09. In addition to the budget surplus, the Rainy Day Account proposed by Gov. Gregoire and passed by the voters last fall will contain \$429 million in constitutionally protected reserves. The Forecast Council also provided the first look at economic and revenue prospects for the next biennium, 2009–11. General Fund revenues are predicted to rise to \$31.9 billion, which represents 5 percent per year growth, which is close to the historical average. (One issue to consider is that we know that some costs are rising at a much higher rate.)

This week in Olympia

Now that the budget forecast has been released work on the Supplemental Budget now shifts into high gear. The fiscal committees for both houses will write separate versions of the Supplemental Budget. The House will release their proposal on Wednesday. The Senate proposal is expected next week.

Monday and Tuesday the House and Senate will finish their floor sessions. Tuesday is the last day for bills to be passed out of the house of origin. On Wednesday, the Legislature will begin its next segment: Policy committee work on bills from the opposite house. I have pasted the hearing schedules for Wed.-Friday for those committees which address legislation related to most of our issues. As you can see, this will again be a very busy week. You may want to check these schedules again later by going to www.leg.wa.gov and clicking on "agendas and schedules". Some of these schedules have not been filled in yet. Most are expected to change as the house of origin bills are sent over.

You will notice as you look at the hearing schedules this week that many of the bill numbers look different. This is due to amendments being added. Here are some definitions:

"**S**" before the number means "substitute" and the bill has been amended in committee.
"**2S**" means "second substitute" and the bill has been amended by two different committees.
"**E**" stands for "engrossed" and is used to indicate the bill includes amendments that were passed on the floor the house of origin.

It is important to look at the amended bills and weigh in on whether or not additional changes should be made. It will also be important to look up those bills which have not passed out of the house of origin yet after the Tuesday deadline to determine whether the bills we have been monitoring are still alive.

Below is a bill update on some bills related to our **Top Priorities** as well as other bills related to supported issues. To be consistent, I am following up on the same bills that I described in the last Grassroots Connection. We will be reviewing other bills that have been scheduled for public hearing as well to determine whether or not we want to provide testimony. See the hearing list which follows for complete details. The bill links are active for those that are scheduled for public hearing. For other bills, go to www.leg.wa.gov, click on "Bill Search", and plug in the bill number.

1. **K-12 Education Funding** – [SSB 6879](#) - Regarding the joint task force on basic education finance. Will have a public hearing this Thurs. at 6PM in the House Education Committee. This will be a great opportunity to testify to our top priority.

2. **Math and Science Education** – [2SHB 2598](#) - Regarding an online mathematics curriculum. Will have a public hearing on Thursday at 10AM in the Senate Early Learning and K-12 Education Committee.

SHB 2809, a study bill regarding recruitment of math and science teachers, has not yet been passed out of the House.

3. **Quality Teaching** – SHB 2775 which would add an additional bonus for Nationally Board certified teachers who teach in high poverty areas passed out of the House, but has not been scheduled for public hearing in the Senate yet.

4. **Student Support Services** – SHB 2773 which would have added funding for either counselors or librarians did not make it out of the Appropriations Committee. It is dead for now.

[ESSB 6380](#) - Enhancing school library programs passed out of the Senate and is scheduled for a hearing in House Education on Thurs. at 6PM. We were more supportive of the House version because of it more closely aligned with our issue.

5. **Special Education Funding** – No bills currently fit our issue.

Other issues of interest:

Assessment System -

ESHB 3166 concerning the redesign of the WASL and end of course assessments has not been scheduled for a hearing in the Senate yet. The Senate and the House appear to have different approaches to dealing with the WASL. It is not at all certain how this bill will be received in the Senate or if it will be given a hearing.

SSB 6503 regarding the segmented math alternative assessment has not passed out of the Senate yet.

Recess and PE – SSB 6042 has not passed out of the Senate yet.

HB 1188 requiring schools to provide opportunities for students to engage in physical activity each day has not passed out of the House yet.

World Language – [2SHB 2523](#) - Creating the position of world language supervisor in the office of the superintendent of public instruction passed out of the House and is scheduled for public hearing in Early Learning on Wed. at 8AM.

SSB 6466 – Creating a task force to study teaching world languages has not passed out of the Senate.

Education Reform – [2SHB 2808](#) - Providing additional opportunities to assist students who have not completed all graduation requirements. This bill passed out of the House and is scheduled for public hearing in Early Learning on Thurs. at 10AM.

[SHB 2810](#) - Enhancing resources and assistance in school districts with concentrations of English language learners. This bill is also scheduled for public hearing in Early Learning on Thurs. at 10AM.

ESSB 6673 creating extended learning opportunities and instructional support for English language learners, low-income students, and students with learning disabilities, passed out of the Senate, but has not yet been scheduled for public hearing in the House.

Foster Kids - [SHB 2679](#) - Creating programs to improve educational outcomes for students in foster care is scheduled for public hearing in the Early Learning on Wed. at 8AM.

Release of Student Information – HB 2026 passed out of the House, but has not been scheduled for public hearing in the Senate.

Wednesday, February 20

Early Learning & K-12 Education* - 02/20/08 8:00 am

Full Committee
Senate Hearing Rm 1
J.A. Cherberg Building
Olympia, WA

Public Hearing:

1. [2SHB 3168](#) - Regarding the creation of the Washington head start program.
2. [SHB 2811](#) - Creating the healthy student grant program.
3. [SHB 2679](#) - Creating programs to improve educational outcomes for students in foster care.
4. [HB 2629](#) - Providing for the delivery of educational services to children who are deaf and hearing impaired.
5. [2SHB 2523](#) - Creating the position of world language supervisor in the office of the superintendent of public instruction.
6. [HB 2813](#) - Requiring an assessment of the need for teacher preparation programs for teachers of visually impaired and blind public school students. (if referred to committee)

Appropriations - 02/20/08 3:30 pm



Full Committee
House Hearing Rm A
John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA

Public Hearing: [HB 2687](#) - Making 2008 operating supplemental appropriations, regarding a Proposed Substitute by Rep. Sommers

Thursday, February 21

Education - 02/21/08 8:00 am

Full Committee

House Hearing Rm B
John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA

Public Hearing:

1. [HB 2991](#) - Providing salary bonuses for nationally certified school speech-language pathologists and audiologists.
2. [HB 2723](#) - Creating reading intervention programs in secondary schools.
3. [HB 3247](#) - Requiring recess time for public school students in grades kindergarten through six.

Work Session:

1. Mentoring Advanced Placement (MAP)
2. Environmental Education.
3. Community for Youth

Early Learning & K-12 Education* - 02/21/08 10:00 am

Full Committee

Senate Hearing Rm 1
J.A. Cherberg Building
Olympia, WA

REVISED 2/15/2008 2:22 PM

Public Hearing:

1. [SHB 3212](#) - Monitoring and addressing achievement of groups of students.
2. [SHB 2810](#) - Enhancing resources and assistance in school districts with concentrations of English language learners.
3. [2SHB 2808](#) - Providing additional opportunities to assist students who have not completed all graduation requirements.
4. [2SHB 2722](#) - Creating an advisory committee to address the achievement gap for African-American students.
5. [EHB 2607](#) - Requiring the professional educator standards board to convene a work group regarding English language learner students.
6. [2SHB 2598](#) - Regarding an online mathematics curriculum.

Appropriations Subcommittee on Education* - 02/21/08 1:30 pm

Full Committee

House Hearing Rm A
John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA

REVISED 2/16/2008 2:21 PM

Work Session: Gifted education programs.

Public Hearing: Senate bills referred to committee.

Appropriations - 02/21/08 3:30 pm



Full Committee

House Hearing Rm A
John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA

Possible Executive Session: [HB 2687](#) - Making 2008 operating supplemental appropriations.

1. The hearing is on the Proposed Substitute by Representative Sommers.

Education* - 02/21/08 6:00 pm

Full Committee

House Hearing Rm B
John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA

REVISED 2/15/2008 10:00 AM

Public Hearing:

1. [ESSB 5714](#) - Creating a pilot program of Spanish and Chinese language instruction.
2. [SB 6183](#) - Providing a process for the dissolution of first-class school directors' districts.
3. [2SSB 6377](#) - Regarding secondary career and technical education.
4. [ESSB 6380](#) - Enhancing school library programs.
5. [SB 6534](#) - Regarding the revision of mathematics standards.
6. [SB 6588](#) - Authorizing the transfer of accumulated leave between the common school and higher education systems.
7. [SSB 6726](#) - Granting the professional educator standards board ongoing authority to establish professional-level certification assessments and performance standards.
8. [SSB 6879](#) - Regarding the joint task force on basic education finance.
9. [SB 6740](#) - Regarding the provision of teacher certification services. (if referred to committee)

Friday, February 22

(I put this first one on the list just to show you the variety of sex offender bills that are being considered. This is definitely a hot and very political topic.)

Human Services & Corrections* - 02/22/08 8:00 am

Full Committee

Senate Hearing Rm 1
J.A. Cherberg Building
Olympia, WA

REVISED 2/14/2008 2:39 PM

Public Hearing:

1. [HB 2436](#) - Allowing crime victims to submit input to the department of corrections regarding whether an offender should be placed into work release.
2. [SHB 2439](#) - Requiring the governing authorities of facilities where convicted sex offenders are confined to determine the offender's immigration status and to release offenders subject to deportation into the custody of federal authorities or at a federal facility used to house persons awaiting deportation.
3. [HB 2728](#) - Requiring sex offender registration for misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor-level indecent exposure when there has been a finding of sexual motivation.
4. [HB 2786](#) - Including level I offenders who fail to maintain registration as required by RCW 9A.44.130 to the statewide notification web site.
5. [HB 1836](#) - Requiring registered sex and kidnapping offenders to register after serving a term of confinement for a

- subsequent offense that is not a sex or kidnapping offense.
6. [2SHB 2714](#) - Making failure to register as a sex offender a class B felony.
 7. [HB 3161](#) - Requiring certain sex offenders to pay the costs of electronic monitoring.

(The Capital Budget Committee is important because it has to do with construction, including school construction.)

Capital Budget - 02/22/08 1:30 pm



Full Committee
House Hearing Rm A
John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA

Possible Executive Session: [HB 2765](#) - Making 2008 supplemental capital appropriations.

Early Learning & Children's Services - 02/22/08 1:30 pm

Full Committee
House Hearing Rm D
John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA

Public Hearing: Senate bills referred to committee.

Education - 02/22/08 1:30 pm

Full Committee
House Hearing Rm B
John L. O'Brien Building
Olympia, WA

Public Hearing: Senate bills referred to committee.

(Below is a very pertinent note from Nancy Amidei who writes POLICY WATCH each week. I wish to thank Nancy for her wonderful resource. If you wish to sign up for this directly, simply send Nancy an email at amidei@u.washington.edu Also, thanks go to WSSDA for their daily email updates. I use these resources, plus the legislative website and our lobbyist Donna Christensen to assist me when I write our weekly Grassroots Connection.)

As POLICY WATCH is fond of reminding readers, influencing legislation isn't a one-time deal. Keep checking on your bills by going to www.leg.wa.gov, and then, at each stage in the process, let your legislators know how you wish to be represented. You don't want to be a pest, but you do want to be polite, brief, and persistent. Lobby Days during the Session raise visibility, plus on-going relationships year round, help legislators gain insights they can't get any other way.