

*Testimony of  
On behalf of  
Regarding:*

Pat Montgomery,  
Washington State PTA,  
The effect of Education Reform on K-12 School Funding

Pat Montgomery  
28818 - 108th Ave SE  
Auburn WA 98092-1925  
253/735-6791  
patmontg@comcast.net

---

I'm Pat Montgomery, an Auburn PTA parent.

John told you how stretched Bellevue is, trying to satisfy Ed Reform's mandates. Auburn has lower demographics and higher ELL than our state average. Here's what it looks like:

OSPI says Auburn funds schools \$700 per kid less than state average. Ed Week says Washington funds \$1,000 per kid less than US average. For my two-child family over 12 years, that's \$40,000 underfunding, compared to the US average! That's \$23 million per year for our district 's 15,000 students.

Add unfunded Ed Reform mandates and what do we have?

I volunteer in my school's ELL, Algebra, and pre-Algebra classes. The Algebra classes are taught by a permanent sub. We cannot escape the Labor Market. We can't even find enough qualified math teachers to comply with state & federal standards & requirements, much less satisfy Education Reform's mandates.

Our two High School pre-algebra classes test at a 7th grade level. We have a kid who "passed" pre-Algebra last year, and was promoted to Algebra. She doesn't understand how negative numbers work. She's studying Cartesian coordinates and Slope-Intercepts, but doesn't know how to subtract 4 from 2. She tests at a 4th grade level

Our district has maxed out its Levy Lid for years. Every time the state raises three quarters of our teachers' COLAs, we cannibalize programs to pay for the other quarter. Every time we divert more resources into Ed Reform mandates, we cannibalize more programs.

So what action does Washington State PTA recommend? How should your task force respond to the Ed Reform's legal and financial implications?

- *First*, acknowledge Ed Reform's destructive effects when not substantially funded,
  - *Second*, create your new definition of basic education aligned with Ed Reform's new expectations,
  - *Third*, urge the legislature to adopt a Basic Education definition substantially congruent with your proposed definition,
  - *Finally*, stop imposing Education Reform on our school districts as an unfunded mandate. Education reform places real, high demands on our already stressed schools. We can't meet those demands without added resources. Calling it "Ed Reform" doesn't make it so.
-