



ISSUE GUIDE 2011

Prepared for the 2011 Legislative Assembly, Oct. 14-15

Contact us:
Ramona Hattendorf, Government Relations Coordinator
2003 65th Ave. West, Tacoma, WA 98466
253-565-2153, www.wastatepta.org

Table of contents

A guide for delegates

From the Legislative Director	3
About Legislative Assembly	4
Our vision, mission and goals	5
Long-term Legislative Principles	6-7
Standing rules	22-23

Proposed priority issues

- **Public education policies and funding**

Early learning	8-9
Highly capable	10-11
Charter school	12-13
Achievement gap	14-16
- **Safe and nurturing environments for children and youth**

School-zone signage	17
---------------------	----
- **Health and well-being of youth**

Juvenile Justice	18-19
------------------	-------

Proposed amendment to existing priority issue

Compensation	20-21
--------------	-------

2011-12 Legislative Committee

Region 1, J David Rubie; rlc1@wastatepta.org
Region 2, Cathy Jo Renner, rlc2@wastatepta.org
Region 3, Debra Arbuckle, rlc3@wastatepta.org
Region 4, Christie Krauszowski, rlc4@wastatepta.org
Region 6, Heidi Bennett; rlc6@wastatepta.org
Region 7, Jessica Stickles; rlc7@wastatepta.org
Region 8, Bobbilyn Hogge; rlc8@wastatepta.org
Region 9, Pat Montgomery, rlc9@wastatepta.org
Region 10, Stacey Riley, rlc10@wastatepta.org
Region 12, Hope Houck, rlc12@wastatepta.org

Legislative Director:
Shelley Kloba,
ptalegdir@wastatepta.org
-

WSPTA staff:
Ramona Hattendorf,
government relations
rhattendorf@wastatepta.org

Dear Delegates,

It is my extreme pleasure to welcome you all to the Washington State PTA Legislative Assembly. I am so glad that you could come, and I recognize that your mere presence here represents a sacrifice of time and money. I truly appreciate that, and want you to know that the work we will do this weekend has great value to our association and will make a huge impact on behalf of children. You are a part of the largest grassroots child advocacy organization in the state of Washington, one that relies on member-driven, knowledge-based public policy. It is the input of our members who have taken the survey, who have shared their ideas with you, as well as your knowledge and insight that will determine our legislative agenda for the upcoming 2012 session of the Washington State Legislature.

I am particularly excited about the survey process this year. In the past, we have relied on a paper survey in most of the local units, with some councils and regions creating their own electronic version of the survey. This year, for the first time, we have the infrastructure available to allow us to send an electronic survey to all members for whom we have an email address. We have enhanced the survey with options for respondents to connect to more advocacy opportunities. It is also an outreach tool we can use to engage members we do not often hear from. This is a tremendous leap forward and it could not have happened without the hard work and dedication of Pat Montgomery, Heidi Bennett, and the entire legislative committee, as well as staff in our Tacoma office. The opportunity to hear the voices of so many more members and engage them in ways we have not been able to before will strengthen our entire advocacy process, and for that, I am truly grateful.

I have some basic instructions for you in order to make this a truly valuable experience. Use this opportunity to network, to listen to what is happening in other parts of the state, to learn about the issues, and to sharpen your advocacy skills. Do not be intimidated if this is your first time attending, you are not alone. Every year, about half of the assembly participants are new attendees. Feel free to ask questions if you don't understand. Veterans, I ask you each to take a newbie under your wing and help them to get comfortable with where to go and what to do. Prepare to stretch your mind to accept new ideas, and to step outside of your comfort zone. Leave with a newly energized desire to make a difference, to speak up, and to share your unique perspective with decision-makers.

It is my sincere hope that you will find our work this weekend stimulating, challenging, and inspiring. I truly appreciate your willingness to engage in the big picture, reaching beyond your own local unit to all children in our state. I want to share with you a quote from sociologist Margaret Mead that inspires me daily: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Warmest regards,

Shelley Kloba

WSPTA Legislative Director

About Legislative Assembly

At this year's Legislative Assembly delegates will be adjusting our 2-year platform, possibly adding to the list of supported issues and possibly amending our compensation position. We will not be re-ranking the issues.

Current platform:

1. Following up on reforms of 2009 and 2010
 - New program of basic education ([HB 2261](#))
 - Accountability, evaluations and family engagement ([SB 6696](#))
2. Math and science instruction
3. Literacy screening and instruction
4. Reduction in force/layoff policies
 - Consider traits other than just seniority, such as teacher effectiveness
5. Fund education first in the state budget process
6. New, research-based model for teacher compensation
 - Emphasize rewarding teacher effectiveness in improving student learning

Also supported:

- Improve food quality in breakfast and lunch programs
- Make physical education/health a core subject

Homework for delegates:

1. Please review this guide and weigh in on the proposed priority issues with your local board and members. You are voting on your PTA/PTSA's behalf. Some units have guidelines about representation. Check your bylaws. Survey responses may help inform your vote.
2. Please review the proposed standing rules; you will be voting on these at the assembly.
3. Please review our vision and mission and our goals; please review our legislative principles. These are guiding documents for our legislative advocacy.

Platform sets our short-term priorities: Our priority platform helps us focus our legislative advocacy and determine which issues warrant the full PTA/PTSA push. Every two years we create an all-new platform. This will next occur in 2012.

About our legislative advocacy

- Washington State PTA has been working to improve children's lives since 1905. With more than 143,000 members and about 920 local PTAs and PTSAs we are the largest membership-based advocacy association in the state. We are chartered by National PTA and belong to its network of about 5 million members.
- Legislative advocacy involves change in governance and can include budget or policy work. At the state level, we meet with legislators and testify before committees, but we also work with government entities responsible for oversight of education and children's health and welfare services.



Our vision

- Making every child's potential a reality

Our mission

- PTA is a powerful voice for all children.
- PTA is a relevant resource for families and communities.
- PTA is a strong advocate for the well-being and education of every child.

Our goals

- Speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
- Support families in developing skills to raise, protect and advocate for their children;
- Encourage family, teacher, student and community involvement;
- Promote opportunities for positive outcomes for children; and
- Be a financially stable, well-managed organization that promotes diversity, provides quality service, models best practices and values its members and employees.

Our strategy

- We will tell the "PTA Story" to our members and the public
- We will increase, retain and diversify our membership
- We will focus our services and activities on our strategic goals
- We will focus our advocacy on a member-driven, knowledge-based public policy agenda
- We will recruit and develop effective leaders

LONG-TERM LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

Updated for 2011-12

Budget and Revenue

The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy affecting tax policies that are fair, equitable, and provide stable, adequate revenues for public education and for programs that benefit children and youth:

- Oppose the expansion of gambling
- Support the passage of state budget bills containing adequate levels of funding for child-related programs
- Oppose tax credits for elementary and secondary school tuition
- Oppose budget policies, deficit reduction efforts, and other legislative proposals that negatively impact funding for child-related programs.

Parent and Family Involvement

The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy that increases parent and family involvement based on the PTA's National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement by advocating for and promoting parent involvement provisions in state legislation affecting children and youth:

- Pre- and in-service training opportunities on Parent/Family Involvement for school personnel
- Employee release time for parent and community involvement
- Outreach to all communities to increase awareness of the importance of parent/family involvement at every level of public policy.

Public Education Policies and Funding

The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy that will strengthen public education for our state's children and youth:

- Alternative programs for all schools
- K-12 class sizes aligned with best-practice research findings
- Continued support for education reform efforts
- Re-defining basic education
- Reducing the achievement gap
- Promotion of early childhood education programs

- Alignment of P-12 and higher education requirements
- Restructuring of education funding in Washington state
- Reduction of high school dropout rates
- Levy and bond election reform
- Increased state-match funding for school facilities construction and renovation
- Ample transportation funding
- Equitable levy and local effort assistance (LEA) funding per student
- Equitable school staff salaries

Health and Well-being of Children and Youth

The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy that protect and promote the health and welfare of children and youth:

- Increased access to health care for children and youth
- Mental health parity
- Promotion of children’s oral health
- Effective prevention and intervention programs
- Comprehensive medically accurate sexual health programs
- School nutrition and physical fitness
- Services for homeless youth and children in foster care
- Comprehensive juvenile justice programs that focus on prevention, treatment and rehabilitation
- Improvements in safety for students with life-threatening health conditions

Safe and Nurturing Environments for Children and Youth

The WSPTA shall identify and initiate education and action on public policy that provides safe and supportive settings and climates for children and youth:

- Anti-bullying and anti-harassment
- Multi-cultural education
- Student and parent education regarding internet safety
- Media education
- Traffic and pedestrian safety
- Substance abuse prevention
- Safe and healthy schools, which reduce environmental hazards
- Consistent, age-appropriate, unstructured play opportunities

Resolutions also guide our advocacy at the local, council and state level. They can be found at http://www.wastatepta.org/advocacy/association_position/index.html

Issue: Public education policies and funding/Early learning

PROPOSED: The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that increase families' access to high-quality early learning programs and improve students' transition to kindergarten. This includes but is not limited to:

- Phasing in universal pre-kindergarten services for 3- and 4-year-olds, such as provided by our state's Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP)
- Improving access to high-quality child care by expanding Washington's quality rating and improvement system (Seeds to Success), a voluntary support and professional development service for licensed providers
- Continuing to phase in universal all-day kindergarten and use of a readiness assessment process, such as the state's new Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills (WaKIDS), a longitudinal data system that informs schools and families of a learner's needs so that they can better support them.
- Provide resources and support for pre-kindergarten through third-grade alignment.

Submitter statement for adoption:

To help fulfill WSPTA's vision of making every child's potential a reality and to wisely use limited resources, we must increase access to high-quality early learning programs and improve transitions to kindergarten. The most rapid growth in brain development happens before age five, yet only 4 percent of our public resources are dedicated to this age group. Instead, we play catch up. It's much more cost effective to make sure a child is prepared for kindergarten than to try to remediate after the fact. To compound the issue, if those kids come from families who can't afford support, their chances of ever catching up to their classmates are not good.

Context and timeliness (staff)

Studies show that every dollar invested in high-quality early learning programs returned between \$3 and \$17ⁱ in benefits. These benefits include:

- A. Lower costs for special education; child welfare; public health; social welfare from teen pregnancy; and juvenile and adult crime
- B. Reduced need to repeat grades in school, lowering school costs
 1. Increased tax revenue from successful students' increased earnings as adultsⁱⁱ

Where we are:

- More than 70,000 children start kindergarten in this state every year. More than half of them start without the basic skills they need to succeed in school and later in life. ⁱⁱⁱ
- Statewide, less than 14 percent of all eligible birth to 5-year-old children and families are served by Early Head Start and Head Start programs.
- Washington has public-private partnerships in place to support this work and a comprehensive plan. Groundwork has been laid, and now the Department of Early Learning is seeking up to \$60 million in federal funds to get more disadvantaged children into quality programs.
<http://www.del.wa.gov/government/racetotop/Default.aspx>

What the studies say:

- Children in ECEAP show significantly greater academic gains, display more positive behaviors, enjoy school more, and have fewer health problems than children without ECEAP.^{iv}
- Teachers with training in early childhood development are better equipped to facilitate young children’s language, cognitive, and social-skills development.^v
- Quality early preschool programs can lead to a decreased need for special education services and interventions during a child’s academic career.^{vi}
- A 2010 Maryland study found that high quality preschool can save taxpayers right away. The study found that for every child that went through their preschool program the elementary school saved almost \$700 per child just in special education savings. The Bremerton School District estimates savings closer to \$3,000 per year per child who avoids special education.

Two strategies: Improve early care; make informed decisions

- About 176,000 children are in licensed child care on any given day in Washington State. Seeds to Success, Washington’s quality rating and improvement system, is designed to support licensed child-care providers in improving the quality of care they offer children and families. Results from the field test show that coaching and quality improvement grants improved observable quality and decreased turnover among lead teachers.
- Many school districts in Washington—and even individual schools within the same district—use different assessment tools at kindergarten entry, and the state is unable to aggregate the information in a meaningful way. Policymakers want to know which programs help young children, how they improve the quality of education and inform instruction, and whether expenditures are effective over time. Families and educators, meanwhile, want to know how their kindergartner is doing developmentally and physically so they can best support and, if needed, provide appropriate intervention.

This issue aligns with foundational work from Washington State PTA’s earliest days, starting in 1915 with the creation of “child study clubs” and outreach to young mothers and continuing today with support for home visits, early family engagement and increased access to high quality early care and education. The issue also places new emphasis on building bridges to the K-12 system.

-

Recommended by WSPTA Board: Do pass

-

Issue submitted by: Agda Burchard, Brooke Valentine, Jennifer Harjenhauser, Juliet Perry, of the Kent Area Council 9.7

- **More resources:** www.wastatepta.org/advocacy

Issue: Public Education Policies and Funding/Highly capable

PROPOSED: Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that ensure highly capable children (K-12) receive an appropriate basic education, which includes access to highly capable programs (K-12). The Washington State PTA recommends that the legislature and Quality Education Council build on the work of the Highly Capable Program Technical Work Group. This shall include, but not be limited to:

- Advocating for a standard definition of highly capable and working to ensure students who are both highly capable and students of color, who are poor, or who have disabilities, have equitable access to the state's highly capable program.
- Further, Washington State PTA supports the recommendation that districts that do not currently offer highly capable programs refer to the guidelines set forth in the report of Highly Capable Program Technical Work Group.

Submitter statement for adoption:

In 2009, the Washington State Legislature passed ESHB 2261 which expanded the programs in basic education to include highly capable students. Beginning in September 2011, funding for highly capable students will be protected under basic education. This is an opportunity for the Washington State PTA to continue advocating for a definition of highly capable students that addresses the needs of students across all cultural and linguistic groups, across all socio-economic strata, and disabling conditions both visible and invisible, and across all areas of human endeavor.

Context and timeliness (staff)

Traditional methods of identifying highly capable students leave out many who possess these qualities or who have the potential to benefit from highly capable programs. White and Asian students are overrepresented while Black, Hispanic and American Indian students are highly underrepresented.^{vii}

And even when they are identified, access to appropriate programs is uneven. At present, OSPI will allow districts to interpret "access to highly capable programs" as one AP class in high school. For most highly capable students, particularly those of color and/or low socioeconomic status, this is way too late.

The areas of concern are the same across the state:

- Level of service provided
- Equity of access
- Multiple measures of identification across various skill sets.

The Highly Capable Program Technical Work Group was funded by the legislature and tasked with setting guidelines for identification procedures, program and curriculum options, accountability, and professional development measures to ensure that all highly capable students, no matter their socioeconomic status, have their needs met. Early and ongoing identification is a critical part of addressing underserved populations. So is ensuring that all children with special needs have equitable access to appropriate instruction and resources.^{viii}

This work continues Washington State PTA's ongoing efforts around basic education reform and plays a part in closing the educational opportunity gap for disadvantaged students and students of color, as well as students with special needs.

-

Recommended by WSPTA Board: Do pass

-

Issue submitted by: Brooke Valentine, of Grass Lake PTA 9.7.20; Janis Traven, of Garfield HS PTSA 6.15.467; David Berg, of J.P. Stewart PTA 5.7.55

- **More resources:** www.wastatepta.org/advocacy

- **Highly capable work group report:**
<http://www.leg.wa.gov/Senate/Committees/EDU/documents/HighlyCapableWkgrpRpt.pdf>

Issue: Public education policies and funding/ Charter schools

PROPOSED: The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that drive innovation and accountability in public education by allowing the operation of public charter schools in the state of Washington.

Submitter statement for adoption:

Charter Schools work – in other states charter schools are proving that the achievement gap is not impossible to overcome. *The Knowledge is Power Program (KIPP)* started in 1994. KIPP has now grown into 99 public schools serving 27,000 students in 20 states and the District of Columbia.

- Over 90% of KIPP students are African-American or Hispanic/Latino, and more than 80% are eligible for reduced lunch.
- KIPP schools enroll all interested students, space permitting, regardless of prior academic record, conduct or socioeconomic background.
- The advances KIPP students make in reading and math scores in four years of middle school are enough to reduce the achievement gap between black and white students *by half in three years*.
- 90% of KIPP middle-school students go on to attend college-prep high schools, and over 85% of KIPP's graduates attend college.

In contrast, Washington's Innovative Schools have not closed the achievement gap, despite having started seven years *before* KIPP ("Schools for the 21st Century" were piloted in Washington in 1987). *Green Dot Charter Schools* operating in the poorest communities of Los Angeles and New York City have achieved similar results. Sixty-one percent of Green Dot students graduate from high school, while the rate in surrounding public schools is 41 percent. Green Dot achieves these results despite spending less per student (\$7,800) than a typical Los Angeles public school (\$10,500). Overall, in California since 1992, successful charters are significantly accelerating the performance of traditionally at-risk and underserved students.

Context and timeliness (staff)

Across the state, many students are attending schools that struggle to excel. According to the Washington State Board of Education's 2010 Achievement Index, as many as six out of 10 students attend a "struggling" or "fair" school, and only one out of 10 attend a "very good" or "exemplary" school. The Index assigned a rank of "struggling, fair, good, very good or exemplary" to all public schools in the state.^{ix}

At the same time, Washington's at-risk children – those who most need a strong learning environment -- are disproportionately impacted by underperforming schools, as evidenced by our entrenched achievement gaps.^x While the state has begun mandatory intervention for our persistently lowest-achieving schools, the process can take years and funding is limited. Families looking for alternatives have limited options.

While parents have the right of school choice in Washington, districts do not have to honor their choice if there is no space at the desired school. Districts do not have to provide transportation to a school that is out of a child's assignment area, and districts are under no obligation to create, expand or support innovative programs.

Legislatively, Washington has been supportive of innovation in schools. Allowing public charters could be one way to increase accessibility to them. Nationally, charter success – like that of typical public schools -- has been mixed.

How charters work:

Public charter schools are independent public schools that have been granted more site-based authority. The school’s “charter” spells out the mission and goals of that specific school. A local nonprofit or similar entity functions as the board of directors for the charter. This provides parents and community members with a forum to provide input. Charter schools must also comply with policies set forth by its authorizer, which is typically a local school board or the state board of education.

Charter schools operate from three basic principles:

- **Choice:** Parents choose the school their child attends; teachers and principals choose to work at that school.
- **Flexibility:** Charter schools can make timely decisions about developing curricula, structuring the school day and hiring teachers who meet the needs of their students.
- **Accountability:** The “charter” of the school functions similar to a contract, making the school accountable to parents, to their charter school authorizers, and to the state. If the school fails to live up to it, the charter can be revoked.

Funding for charters is the same for any public school: The money follows the student. Charters would not require new funding, but they would divert funding to new programs.

Charter schools represent a shift in management structure. Currently policy and practice in our state’s schools are determined by elected officials, administrators, and unions representing staff. Charter schools introduce the concept of an independent board of directors and emphasize site-based management (as opposed to district or state management). Rules governing charters vary depending on state law.

Nationally, PTA acknowledges charter schools as one avenue to school reform and supports the concept of charter schools *if* the schools reflect the positions and principles of PTA, primarily strong family engagement coupled with a positive, student-centered learning climate. The National PTA will support legislation or policy decisions relating to charter schools that adhere to and comply with applicable laws and guidelines set forth for other public elementary and secondary educational institutions.

-

Recommended by WSPTA Board: Do pass

-

Issue submitted by: Alison Meryweather, of Issaquah Council 2.6; Beth Sigall, of Rosa Parks ES PTSA 2.8.43; Chad Magendanz, of Maywood Middle School PTSA 2.6.40; Judy Morgan, of Hanford Secondary PTSA 12.5.45; Michele Braccia, of Hanford Secondary PTSA 12.5.45; Glenda Thomson, of Hanford Secondary PTSA 12.5.45; Audrey Bennett, of Bellevue PTSA Council 2.3

- **More resources:** www.wastatepta.org/advocacy

Issue: Public Education Policies and Funding/
Achievement gaps and educational opportunities

PROPOSED: The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that eliminate the state's achievement gaps and create equitable opportunities for all students. Steps can include, but are not limited to, efforts to foster:

- Effective, culturally competent educators who have high expectations for every child
- Ongoing collaboration that helps teachers maximize instructional time, align materials and fill in gaps with challenging and engaging curricula for all students
- A positive school climate that factors in the needs of all learners
- Student-focused practices that encompass intervention and leadership strategies for each child and every classroom with positive academic and behavioral intervention systems
- Strong leadership at every school; transformational leadership at high-needs schools
- Widespread, statewide use of longitudinal data and formative assessments, such as WaKids, that inventory academic and social-emotional benchmarks to determine which students will need additional support, so families and schools can provide appropriate intense, targeted intervention in a timely manner
- Consistently effective home-school communications and family engagement that assists in the instructional development of children
- A funding formula that ensures children with more need get adequate support to meet standards

We believe great educational outcomes are possible for all students, including students of color, students of diverse cultural or linguistic backgrounds, lower income status and students with special needs.

Submitter statement for adoption:

Studies of the achievement gaps date back to the 1960s, yet the divide persists and is widening in some Washington school districts. It is time to take action, to use empirical data and quantitative analyses to eliminate what hasn't worked, and use the funds available to help all students obtain success in grades K-12 so they can be successful in college, chosen careers, and life.

Studies and state work groups have identified as key steps to ensuring all Washington children receive great educational outcomes: communication and family engagement; rigor and relevance; cultural competency; equitable funding; and use of longitudinal data to monitor and help kids.

Why should you care whether all children do well in school?

- **Future Financial:** It will be cheaper for our community to graduate all students with the knowledge they need to start careers or continue on to college or technical schools. The more educated the population is, the better jobs adults can have, the more persons are employed, the more taxpayers you have, the fewer citizens in prison and using social services.

- **Current Social Justice:** Education is the key to a bright future, and that advantage should be given to all students, not just one color or one class.
- **Washington State Constitution:** Article IX, Section I of the Washington State Constitution states “It is the paramount duty of the state to make ample provision for the education of all children residing within its borders ...

Context and timeliness (staff)

According to state analysis, the black/white and Hispanic/non-Hispanic white gaps in 10th grade math won’t close for another 54 and 46 years, respectively. And while our white and Asian students are internationally competitive in math and science, our black and Hispanic eighth-graders perform at the level of students from developing nations^{xi}

Moreover, the populations most at risk are also the ones growing the most rapidly. The number of Hispanic students grew by 73 percent over the past decade; non-Hispanic white students, in contrast, declined by 13 percent.

Cost to society:

Students unable to meet standards are more likely to drop out. Nearly 33,900 students did not graduate from Washington’s high schools in 2009; the lost lifetime earnings in Washington for that class of dropouts alone totals more than \$8.8 billion.^{xii}

“Over a working lifetime, high school dropouts are estimated to earn \$400,000 less than those who graduated from high school. ...By contrast, adults with high school diplomas contribute major fiscal benefits to the country over their lifetime. The combined lifetime fiscal benefits—including the payment of payroll, federal, and state income taxes – could amount to more than \$250,000 per graduated student.”^{xiii}

Loss of human capital:

- The incidence of institutionalization problems among young high school dropouts was more than 63 times higher than among young four-year college graduates.^{xiv}
- The nation’s young high school dropouts in 2006-2007 were nearly four times as likely as their peers with a bachelor’s or higher academic degree to be living in a family with an annual income below 125% of the poverty line. Many of these families were dependent on cash income transfers and in-kind benefits from federal and state government (food stamps, rental subsidies, Medicaid benefits, federal and state EITC credits) to support themselves.^{xv}

Loss of educational opportunities:

Washington state has several gaps – racial, income, English language learner. The gaps also affect children in foster care and special education. Children in special education, in particular:

- Are less likely to receive access to rigorous and full curriculum^{xvi}
- Have limited academic and post-secondary opportunities^{xvii}
- Have limited interaction with “abled” or academically mainstreamed peers and increased sense of social stigmatization^{xviii}

Washington has entrenched racial and income disparities for all subjects tested, at all grades. This gap extends into who is enrolled in highly capable programs, who is placed into special education, and who is disciplined and in what manner. Ultimately it is reflected in who drops out, who goes to college and who goes to prison.

Washington State PTA's vision is that every child will reach his or her potential. This issue moves beyond lamenting the gaps and focuses on implementing specific, proven strategies in every classroom, every school, every district.

-

Recommended by WSPTA Board: Do pass

-

Issue submitted by: Deb Blakeslee, of Stewart MS PTA 10.9.280 and Tacoma Council 10.9; Janet Stewart, of Tacoma Council 10.9; John Stokes of Interlake High School PTSA 2.3.150; Sebrena Burr of Seattle Council PTSA 6.15 and South Shore School PreK-8 PTSA 6.15.329; Stephan Blanford, of Beacon Hill International School, 6.15.42; Karen Campbell, of Interlake High School PTSA 2.3.150; Elizabeth Piekarczyk, of Mount Si High School PTSA 2.18.60 and Snoqualmie Valley SD Council 2.18

- **More resources:** www.wastatepta.org/advocacy

Issue: Safe and Nurturing Environments for Children and Youth/**School-zone signage**

PROPOSED: The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that create consistent school speed zone and school warning signage across all school districts, counties and cities so that drivers routinely recognize them, reduce speed and watch out for pedestrians and bicyclists.

-

Submitter statement for adoption:

Speed kills. Statistics show that pedestrians are 8 times more likely to be killed if struck by a vehicle traveling 30 mph versus 20 mph. Too many of our schools are located on streets and roads where the speed limit is always 30mph or higher. Uniform school signage and a consistent application of a 20 mph speed limit will help enhance safety at our schools and can save lives.

A stronger law that requires a level of uniform safety measures and low speed limits at our schools must be adopted. Without uniformity of school speed zone and warning signs drivers are confused and don't recognize when they are in a school zone.

-

Context and timeliness (staff)

School zones should be safe zones for children, and should be clearly and consistently marked. But because state law allows school zones to be marked in a variety of ways,^{xix} instead we have confusing conditions for drivers and pedestrians. County and city governments regularly adopt differing policies and ordinances. School districts have no authority or jurisdiction and must work with local governments.

At the same time, more students are walking and biking to school because of school transportation funding cuts. In 2005, the Washington Safe Routes to School program was adopted and charged with addressing the impact of cuts to school transportation; it did not address uniformity of school zone signs. In 2009, the governor issued an executive order to eliminate boards and committees in Washington, which included the Safe Routes to School Advisory Committee.

Parents, community members, and local PTAs attempt to address school speed zone issues individually and sometimes with multiple local jurisdictions only to find that results are sporadic and inconsistent. Local officials are slow to act until serious incidents or injuries occur. The use of flashing amber warning signs is increasing due to a voluntary grant program from the Washington State Traffic Safety Commission; however, this effort is making matters worse, not better. While these devices produce the desired effect at a location where they are installed, they marginalize the effectiveness of signage at other locations and minimize driver awareness where they are not used, further compromising safety.

-

Recommended by WSPTA Board: Do pass

-

Issue submitted by: Jack Markley, of Pope PTA 5.7.42; Valerie Bennett, of Hunt Elementary PTA 5.7.17; Donna Drumm, of Edgerton PTA 5.7.4; Dori Tate, of Ballou Jr. High PTA 5.7.85;

- **More resources:** www.wastatepta.org/advocacy

Issue: Health and Well-being of Children and Youth/ Juvenile Justice

PROPOSED: The Washington State PTA renews its support for the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act and shall initiate or support legislation or policies that:

- Keep youth in school and out of the justice system
- Ensure equity and cultural competence within the justice system
- Ensure age- and developmentally appropriate responses
- Strengthen the partnership between the federal government and state and local governments in juvenile justice matters.

Submitter statement for adoption:

Given that there are hundreds of juvenile justice systems throughout the U.S., it is critical that juvenile justice have a dedicated focus and a “home” within federal government for purposes of developing national policies, objectives, priorities and plans, and for providing guidance, support and oversight to states/territories in implementing the JJDP. The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) is the agency charged with responsibility for juvenile justice at the U.S. Department of Justice. OJJDP carries out its purposes through research, policies and grants to states and localities to assist them in planning, establishing, operating, coordinating and evaluating projects for the development of more effective education, training, research, prevention, diversion, treatment, and rehabilitation in the areas of juvenile delinquency prevention and systems improvements.

Similarly, it is imperative that the states be in constant and collaborative contact with the federal government in order to develop strategies that work for the states, meet local needs and lead to best and promising practices for children, youth and communities across the nation.

The state advisory groups fulfill this role, individually and collectively, by:

1. Embodying models for collaborative systems change
2. Providing real-world advice and counsel to their respective governors and state legislatures, as well as the president and the U.S. Congress
3. Serving as incubators for cost-effective innovations that create optimal outcomes for the prevention of delinquency.

Context and timeliness (staff)

This topic touches every corner of our state and disproportionately affects our most vulnerable children.

- Detention has a negative, disproportionate impact on youth of color. In 2003, African-American youth were detained at a rate 4.5 times higher than whites. Latino youth were detained at twice the rate of whites.^{xx}
- Juveniles in the courts have been shown to suffer from higher than average incidence of mental/behavioral health problems, learning disabilities and school failure, as well as under-addressed family intervention and support needs.^{xxi}

The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act sends federal money to states that agree to some core protections for youth. Partnerships are crucial to ensuring these protections are carried out at the

local level. The reauthorization bill would make some changes, including:

- Keep kids out of adult jails and prisons;
- Require states to reduce racial & ethnic disparities;
- Create incentives for the use of programs that research has shown to work best;
- Refocuses attention on prevention programs intended to keep children from entering the juvenile or criminal justice systems

JJDPAs were first enacted in 1974 and last renewed in 2002 with bipartisan support. It is particularly important that federal funding is secured. Our state juvenile justice program is also up for renewal. When evaluating the impact this issue has on youth, consider:

- Most – 78 percent -- of detained youth are being held for non-violent offenses,^{xxii} such as running away, truancy or curfew violations.
- “Get tough” policies have increased in popularity since the 1990s,^{xxiii} but there are less severe alternatives to incarcerating youth that are effective. Community-based programs, including diversion programs, family programs, drug treatment, and evening reporting centers have been shown to be less costly than detention or incarceration and reduce recidivism.^{xxiv}
- Children tried as adults have been found to be more likely to reoffend than those not exposed to the adult criminal court system, as they receive little or no education, rehabilitative programming, or mental health services. To compound the problem, children are given an adult criminal record, thereby significantly limiting future education and employment opportunities, and they face similar penalties as adults, such as life without parole.^{xxv}
- The annual average cost per detention bed ranges between \$32,000 and \$65,000.^{xxvi}

Historically, creating a juvenile justice system is one of PTA’s biggest wins. Washington State PTA is positioned to help youth at every stage – from working with school districts to implement positive behavior strategies, to advocating for systemic improvements in the state’s juvenile justice system, to ensuring the federal funding and infrastructure stays in place.

-

Recommended by WSPTA Board: Do pass

-

Issue submitted by: Dori Tate, of Ballou Jr. High PTSA 5.7.85

- **More resources:** www.wastatepta.org/advocacy

Amendment: **New model for teacher compensation**

A New Model for Teacher Compensation is our No. 6 priority. It reads:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that lead to a new research-based state teacher compensation model that emphasizes rewarding teacher effectiveness in improving student learning.

If the amendment passes, the issue would read:

The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation or policies that reward teachers for academic credits and degrees as well as years of service to students.

EFFECT OF CHANGE: Washington State PTA would no longer advocate for a research-based system that factors in teacher effectiveness.

BACKGROUND:

The position falls under the larger umbrella of education and funding reform and reflects ongoing work by the state to streamline its K-12 salary allocation model and create a new four-tier evaluation system that defines and promotes both student and professional growth. This position was purposely written in a broad manner as a conversation starter. Last year Washington State PTA did not have a specific salary model in mind, but did want to emphasize the need for a research-based model as well as the importance of considering student outcomes.

In the 2011 legislative session, compensation made its way into various proposals, though none resulted in legislation. Currently teachers receive “step increases” for years of experience and additional credits of study. Some teachers also receive bonuses for National Board Certification. While our position does not preclude experience and additional study, neither does it affirm them.

-

Recommended by WSPTA Board: Do not pass

-

Issue submitters: Bill Mokin, Alica Ogren, Susan Kelly, Joanna McCann, Jared Fernandez, and Paula Nocente-Casey, all of Challenger PTA 2.6.6; Kim Brousseau and Sandra Genereaux, both of Newcastle PTA 2.6.18; and Phyllis Runyon, of Maywood MS PTSA 2.6.40

Rationale behind do not pass recommendation:

The WSPTA Legislative Committee felt a discussion of teacher education level was appropriate to have and that enough had changed on the legislative front to warrant consideration of an amendment.

However, the committee also felt this particular amendment would undermine past advocacy that asked for more importance to be placed on whether students are learning. Washington State PTA has prioritized teacher effectiveness and compensation reform for several years.

While theoretically both positions could be on our platform (consider student success, as well as experience and study), the committee felt an additional position would be counterproductive.

The WSPTA Board of Directors concurred with the legislative committee and voted to put it before delegates, but with a do not pass recommendation.

Rationale behind proposed amendment

The proposal is mainly driven by a concern that the state could move to a merit-pay system based on standardized test scores.

Research also indicates teachers are intrinsically motivated^{xxvii} and that merit bonuses can actually detract from job performance when the skill set is mainly cognitive.^{xxviii} This last research indicates that what motivates cognitive employees is a secure salary and assurances of independence and creativity.

(Staff note: Per law, the new evaluations under development may factor in student success, but if they do so they **MUST** include multiple measures, not just a single test score. There is no language around what compensation can be based on, and the idea of school-wide bonuses for increased test scores has been considered, but not advanced.)

Submitter statement for adoption

Education is currently the only profession in which education and experience is being questioned as to their importance. It is critical to address all issues directly tied to student success; e.g., funding, socio-economics, ethnicity, special needs, etc. In every community there are students just learning English, students who come to school hungry, students who do not have educational support at home, students who change schools often, students whose attendance affects their ability to stay up with their classmates, etc. Rather than taking an indirect approach to helping kids via a teacher compensation model that is flawed, PTA would do better to remain focused on efforts that have direct benefit to kids.

Why is this issue important?

About 80 percent of school budgets go to salaries, and the current model is not research-based. In fact, research does not show a correlation between extra study in general and successful student outcomes, though some areas of study do indicate a positive impact. Teachers with only a bachelor's degree – even if they are board certified – do not get as much of a “step increase” as their cohorts who have a master's degree. State Senate staff estimated about \$900 million was tied up in rewarding for extra study.

Moreover, the money the state sends to cover staffing doesn't align with actual need.

- It doesn't factor in regional cost of living differences
- It doesn't accommodate mentoring needs of new staff
- It doesn't accommodate ongoing professional development needs, or collaboration time
- It arbitrarily pays some teachers more – simply because they were grandfathered in at higher salaries and the difference was never phased out.

This combination of factors has become an area of concern as more districts trim class time to accommodate staff training or collaboration, and as funding needs for professional development compete with needs to fund counselors, librarians and other student supports. Districts also increasingly rely on local levies to meet basic payroll obligations. If those levies fail, or if the state cuts levy assistance to property-poor districts, districts could struggle to meet their contractual obligations.

- **More resources:** www.wastatepta.org/advocacy

PROPOSED STANDING RULES

2011 Washington State PTA Legislative Assembly

Transfer of credentials

1. An alternate replacing a voting delegate must present proper identification and a letter from the unit/council president authorizing the transfer.

Caucus sessions

1. All delegates and guests may speak during the caucus sessions. Each proposed issue will have both a caucus (for proponents of the issue) and an opposition caucus (for opponents of the issue). Please attend only the caucus that best represents your view of the issue.

Quorum

1. Once a quorum has been established for a voting session, a quorum shall be deemed present for the entire session.

Speaking procedures

For, Proposed Changes to Legislative Principles, Proposed Priority Issues, Proposed Amendments to Existing Priority Issues, and Proposed Resolutions

1. A delegate may speak for no more than two minutes at a time and no more than twice on the same issue.
2. A non-voting delegate may speak by borrowing a voting credential from their local unit for the duration of debate for that specific issue.
3. During general sessions, the chair shall alternate recognizing speakers at the “for” and “against” microphones. If speakers at one microphone have reached their limit described above, the microphone then goes to the opponents until time runs out.
4. The first speaker for either side has the option to include multiple speakers within their two-minute maximum allotment.
5. All proposals that have been put forth by the WSPTA Board of Directors for consideration will have 20 minutes for debate, and the clock shall run without interruption unless ordered stopped by the chair.

Year two in our priority cycle

Our short-term platform follows a two-year cycle. We are in year two of the cycle. Delegates may consider adding positions or amending existing positions, as put forth by the WSPTA Board of Directors and as outlined in the Definition of Terms, below.

Definition of terms

WSPTA’s advocacy must align with our Vision and Mission. WSPTA’s body of positions is comprised of our Legislative Principles, Priority Issues (also referred to as the short-term platform), and Resolutions. Proposed Priority Issues, Proposed Amendments to Existing Priority Issues, Proposed Resolutions and proposed changes to WSPTA’s Legislative Principles must be reviewed by committee and the WSPTA Board of Directors before being presented to delegates for discussion and vote. Our body of positions can be found on our advocacy website: http://www.wastatepta.org/advocacy/association_position

- **Legislative Principles:** Legislative Principles are long-term guidelines for our legislative advocacy. Priority issues should align with our legislative principles.
- **Priority Issues:** Priority Issues make up WSPTA’s two-year platform. In year one of the cycle, delegates decide which issues to designate as “priority,” then they rank the priority issues into “Top 5*” and “Also Supported” categories. In year two of the cycle, delegates can add new issues to the “Also Supported” category. Additions will be listed alphabetically. (*In 2010, delegates opted to vote in a Top 6.)
- **Amendments to Existing Priority Issues:** In year two of our platform cycle, delegates may consider amendments to existing priority issues. Proposed amendments should not change the underlying intent. If delegates substantively change a Top 5 issue, it will be placed on the “Also Supported” category and the Top 5 will be re-numbered, accordingly.
- **Resolutions:** These are positions that guide our various advocacy efforts at the local, council and state level, including but not limited to legislative efforts.

Voting procedures

1. Voting delegates must display their voting credential when voting during the session. The issues approved in 2010 will remain on the platform and retain their rank. The new issues and amendments to existing issues will be given an up or down vote, and then added to the end of the supported list of issues in alphabetical order.

Emergency/substitute issues

1. The Legislative Assembly shall not consider emergency issues or issues other than those originally presented to the delegates.

Issue campaign material

1. Issue campaign material shall include the name of the individuals(s), unit, council, or committee sponsoring the material.
2. All material must have the approval of the chair prior to distribution.
3. Materials may only be distributed outside of the assembly hall and no campaign materials shall be posted.
4. Campaign material may not exceed 8-1/2” x 11” in size and shall not be worn or carried into the assembly hall. Campaign materials must not disrupt the proceedings as determined by the chair.

Communication and recording devices

1. Cell phones and pagers must be silenced during classes and general sessions. Video or audio recording equipment, unless approved by the chair, shall not be used in the assembly hall or other meetings.

Minutes

1. A committee appointed by the president shall approve the minutes of the Legislative Assembly.

-
- ⁱ National Institute of Early Learning Research found savings of \$4 to \$8 for every dollar invested; A Rand study of 2005 found returns of up to \$17.
- ⁱⁱ Washington State Early Learning Plan, executive summary, September 2010, http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/elac-qrisc/docs/ELP_Exec.pdf
- ⁱⁱⁱ (Source: OSPI's Student Readiness for Kindergarten. <http://www.k12.wa.us/EarlyLearning/pubdocs/KindergartenPreparednessSurveyReport.pdf>)
- ^{iv} ECEAP Outcomes, 2009 Schoolyear, <http://www.del.wa.gov/publications/eceap/docs/ECEAPOutcomesReport09-10.pdf>
- ^v Akerman, D.J. "Getting Teachers from Here to There: Examining Issues Related to an Early Care and Education Teacher Policy." *Early Childhood Research and Practice* 7, no. 1 (2005).
- ^{vi} Lawrence J., J.M. Schweinhart, Z. Xiang, W. S. Barnett, C.R. Belfield, and M. Nores. *Lifetime effects: The High/Scope Perry Preschool study through age 40*. Ypsilanti: High/Scope Press, 2005.
- ^{vii} Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee, *Closing Opportunity Gaps in Washington's Public Education System*, January 2010 report, page 10. <http://www.k12.wa.us/Cisl/pubdocs/AgapLegReport2010.pdf>
- ^{viii} Highly Capable Program Technical Work Group report: <http://www.k12.wa.us/HighlyCapable/Workgroup/pubdocs/HCPWorkgroupLegReport.pdf>
- ^{ix} Washington State Board of Education 2010 Achievement Index, <http://www.sbe.wa.gov/> (Note: This index was renamed; in draft stages it was referred to as an Accountability Index)
- ^x League of Education Voters, *Washington's Achievement Gap, 2011 Session*, <http://www.educationvoters.org/session-2011/issues-2/washington%E2%80%99s-achievement-gap/>
- ^{xi} OSPI's Trends in Mathematics and Science Study, as cited in 2010 Achievement Gap Oversight and Accountability Report, page 5, <http://www.k12.wa.us/Cisl/pubdocs/AgapLegReport2010.pdf>
- ^{xii} Alliance for Excellent Education; and cited in OSPI's 2011 Achievement Gap and Accountability Report, page 5, <http://www.k12.wa.us/AchievementGap/pubdocs/AgapLegReport2011.pdf>
- ^{xiii} The Center for Labor Market Studies at Northeastern University, Boston, "Left Behind in America: The Nation's Dropout Crisis," http://www.clms.neu.edu/publication/documents/CLMS_2009_Dropout_Report.pdf
- ^{xiv} The Center for Labor Market Studies, *Consequences for Dropping Out*,
- ^{xv} The Center for Labor Market Studies, *Consequences for Dropping Out*,
- ^{xvi} (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Fierros & Conroy, 2002);
- ^{xvii} (Harry & Klingner, 2006)
- ^{xviii} (Gartner & Lipskey, 1999; National Research Council, 2002)
- ^{xix} WAC 392-151-035 and RCW 46-61-440.
- ^{xx} Campaign for Youth Justice, <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/> accessed November 18, 2010)
- ^{xxi} http://www.act4jj.org/media/factsheets/factsheet_11.pdf
- ^{xxii} Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention
- ^{xxiii} <http://www.modelsforchange.net/publications/121>
- ^{xxiv} Source: Campaign for Youth Justice, <http://www.campaignforyouthjustice.org/> Accessed November 18, 2010.
- ^{xxv} Source: Act 4JJ "Trying Youth as Adults Fact Sheet". p. 2. http://www.act4jj.org/media/factsheets/factsheet_20.pdf accessed November 20, 2008.
- ^{xxvi} Ziedenberg and Holman. "The Dangers of Detention: The Impact of Incarcerating Youth in Detention and other Secure Facilities."
- ^{xxvii} Teacher Pay for Performance: http://www.performanceincentives.org/data/files/pages/POINT%20REPORT_9.21.10.pdf; An Evaluation of the Teacher Advancement Program; http://www.mathematica-mpr.com/publications/pdfs/education/tap_yr2_rpt.pdf; Merit Pay: Will It Work? Is It Politically Viable? http://www.hks.harvard.edu/pepg/MeritPayPapers/goodman_turner_10-07.pdf
- ^{xxviii} The surprising truth about what motivates us, (video). Dan Pink, RSA Animate video lecture. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u6XAPnuFJc>