

**Washington State PTA**  
**PROPOSED LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY ISSUES**  
**2006-07**



The following proposed priority issues have been submitted for consideration at the 2006 Washington State PTA Legislative Assembly. These proposed issues have been put forward by grassroots PTA members throughout the state, and are voted on by PTA legislative representatives at Legislative Assembly.

The Legislation Committee recommendations noted for each issue represents the opinion of the 2006/07 WSPTA Legislation Committee. A “do pass” recommendation refers to the Priority Issue Platform – it is the Committee’s opinion that the issue should be included on the 2006/07 platform. Likewise, a “do not pass” recommendation notes the Committee’s belief that the issue should not be included on the platform. It is the opinion of the Committee that all of the below listed issues deserve full discussion and consideration from the delegate body at the WSPTA 2006 Legislative Assembly.

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**Budget and Revenue Policies**

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**Title: Simple Majority for Levies and Bonds**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that allow the people to vote on Simple Majority for excess levy and bond ballot measures run at any of the six election dates. These ballot measures include but are not limited to school levies and bonds.

**Rationale:** It is critical to schools that the “Super Majority” requirement for school bonds and levy votes be eliminated. Currently all school spending levies must attain a 60% majority. School districts are increasingly forced to rely on local levy dollars to provide services not funded by the Basic Education Allocation formula and are dependent on local bonds to raise funds for building construction as well as routine maintenance. Students are negatively impacted by over-crowded and under-maintained schools due to bond failures. School districts are increasingly dependent on levy dollars because the Basic Education funded by the state does not completely fund transportation, special education, and English language learners nor does it cover technology proficiency, librarians, counselors, custodians or coaches. In addition to school levies, library and other excess levies affect children, families, and communities, and should be allowed to pass with a simple majority vote of the people.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: DO PASS**

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**Title: Washington State’s Tax System**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that design and enact a tax system for Washington State that is fair, equitable, stable, straightforward, easily complied with and administered, provides ample revenue to meet the needs of all children for education, health and human services, and promotes a healthy economy.

**Rationale:** Ample revenue is necessary to accomplish the goals WSPTA has for improved education funding and high academic standards, coverage of all children in the health care system, and care for their social service needs for now and the future. Without reform of the tax (revenue) system that is fair, equitable and ample, there may be little gains from any of the work of Washington Learns or any proposal for improvement in the health and social service fields. Current elements of the tax system produce a number of negative consequences for families, businesses, and the state’s economy. Policy makers need to strike a

balance between providing effective, efficiently run public programs for the citizens of Washington and providing a business-friendly climate that will attract new businesses and retain current companies.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: DO PASS**

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**Equity in Education**

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**Title: Conditional Scholarships**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that provide consistent and sufficient funding for conditional college scholarships, which may be forgiven, in exchange of teaching service in Washington State’s public K-12 schools. The scholarship shall lead to teacher certification with endorsements in one of the following areas: Special Education, Science, Mathematics, and Bilingual education.

**Rationale:** There is a significant shortage of qualified educators in several areas of certification, including Special Education, Science, Mathematics, and Bilingual education. Providing financial incentives for new educators or current educators seeking additional endorsements to pursue certification in these identified shortage areas could ease this problem. Two of these areas are or soon will be tested on the WASL. Special education populations continue to increase in our districts as do students requiring bilingual support as they transition to English. These two groups of students represent substantial achievement gaps across the state and a shortage of qualified teachers only contribute to this gap. Clearly, qualified educators teaching within their endorsement area or who are able to engage students using proven instructional strategies (such as are employed in special and bilingual education) will have a bigger impact on student learning and can help close the achievement gap for students.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: DO PASS**

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**Title: The DREAM Act**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that call on Congress to enact the Development, Relief, and Education of Alien Minors Act and/or the Student Adjustment Act that allow immigrant students to begin the process of becoming legal citizens.

**Rationale:** Students who have successfully completed high school requirements but who lack legal documentation have been granted the ability to access in-state tuition in Washington State along with a number of other states. While access to in-state tuition has provided these resident students access to higher education, without adjustment of their actual immigration status they still will likely not be able to legally work in this country once they complete their education. These students represent a substantial asset for their communities, and it is in our best interest that once they successfully complete their education they be allowed to work in our communities.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: DO PASS**

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**Health, Safety, and Well-being of Children and Youth**

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**Title: Sex Offender Registration**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that require all Level III sex offenders to be electronically monitored for the duration of the registration requirements and as well as the requirement for all sex offenders who register as transient or homeless to be electronically monitored for the duration of their homeless and/or transient status.

**Rationale:** The most frequent victims of sexual attacks are often the most vulnerable segment of our society, with more than one-third of all sexual assaults involving a child victim younger than 12. Children deserve the right to live in safe communities. Thousands of sex offenders fail to register each year – with no repercussions. There are minimal consequences to the offender but there are significant potential consequences to the communities where they reside. Convicted sex offenders who register as ‘transient’ have no known address. Our children’s safety is dependent on more effective precautions.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: DO PASS**

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**K-12 Public Education -- Assessments**

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**Title: Assessments for English Language Learners**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that ... would exempt English language learners from having their WASL scores count until they have successfully passed an English language proficiency assessment approved by the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Legislation should require school districts to prepare a plan to ensure these students are making adequate progress in learning the English language.

**Rationale:** For English language learners, the WASL is first and foremost a test of their proficiency in English. It is unfair to require students who have not attained a sufficient level of proficiency in English to take such a high-stakes test that is only administered in English. Successful completion of the WASL is currently a requirement for graduation and to receive a Certificate of Academic Achievement. Most districts have English language learners who do not have sufficient proficiency in English to master the complexities of the WASL. These students should be exempt from having their WASL count until they have passed a pre-determined English proficiency exam.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**Title: Assessment System Improvements**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that enhance the current state assessment system by: creating a process that allows students to access WASL alternative assessments and/or additional performance measures before failing the WASL twice; utilizing technology readily available to the students for the purposes of offering alternative methods of assessment; and by creating and implementing valid and reliable alternative assessments that actively engage students and allow students with different learning styles and students not proficient in the English language to demonstrate proficiency in all subjects.

**Rationale:** Students are not “one size fits all” therefore it is not reasonable to expect that one assessment is appropriate for every student. Students deserve the opportunity to show they have met our education standards without experiencing the negative impact of repeated failure on the state assessment. Usually teachers, parents or counselors can recognize a student who may not be able to succeed within the narrow confines of the WASL exam. They should be able to work with the student to pursue an alternative path. Further, many students are unsuccessful on the WASL due to a lack of proficiency in the English language or because of their learning styles.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: DO PASS**

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**Title: Phase-in Certificate of Academic Achievement**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that would phase in the Certificate of Academic Achievement as a graduation requirement as follows: Reading and Writing portions of the WASL implemented for the graduating class of 2008. If the supporting elements of the assessment system are fully implemented and deemed valid and reliable by the State Board of Education math will be added for the class of 2011 and science will be added for the class of 2014.

**Rationale:** Although Washington has been undergoing education reform since 1993, it took several years before the state established EALRs in the tested content areas. Only then could districts begin the process of realigning curriculum with the higher standards, focusing on learning requirements, and providing students with the necessary tools to successfully pass the 10th grade WASL. Most high schools in the state have large numbers of students who have failed one or more parts of the WASL. It is important to understand that the state and most districts are just now beginning to address mathematics at the same level of effort as they have in the area of reading. The latest WASL results to show that it will be several years before we can expect to have reasonable results in the mathematics area. Phasing in the requirement to pass all portions of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade WASL allows districts and students to continue to focus on improving curriculum alignment and provides a more humane approach to student improvement.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: DO PASS**

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**Title: Restore National Student Assessments**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that restores national student assessments and balances the assessment system required by NCLB by 1) only administering the WASL in the required grades of 4, 7 and 10; and replacing the WASL in the alternate grades of 3,5,6 and 8 with a national or international student assessment; or 2) substituting parts of the WASL, such as mathematics and reading comprehension, with sections from national or internationally standardized tests.

**Rationale:** Currently the WASL is the only student assessment administered by the state of Washington. It is unique to our state so there is no way for parents to compare student achievement nationally or internationally. The WASL test is not “calibrated” to national or international student assessment tests to accurately measure achievement of every student relative to peers outside Washington state. This may be achieved by substituting parts of the WASL, such as mathematics and reading comprehension, with sections from national or international standard tests or allowing nationally or internationally normed tests to be administered in place of the WASL on alternate years for grades 3-8. National or international student assessment tests are typically administered on one day or over a period of time that is significantly less than the WASL. By substituting parts of the WASL with sections from national or international standardized tests or allowing replacement of the WASL with national or internationally normed tests in grades 3, 5, 6 and 8, loss of student instruction time is reduced and cost of student assessment is also significantly reduced.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**K-12 Public Education -- Curriculum**

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**Title: Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that provide identified funding for Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) honors programs

**Rationale:** In the past Washington State provided funding to support AP and IB honors programs. Several years ago that funding support was eliminated. Currently school districts must fund these programs, including the costs of curriculum, supplementary materials, and exams, from existing general funds, thereby shortchanging other programs and potentially diluting the honors curriculum. In order to meet the challenge

of closing the achievement gap more students should have access to AP& IB honors programs. Staff members must be able to access professional development opportunities in order to become skillful in the teaching methods and thereby appropriately deliver the curriculum of these highly regarded honors programs. In addition, students need the financial support necessary to test in the programs, especially low income students.

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**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

**Title: Highly Capable Programs**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that that define highly capable education as basic education, and increase capacity and consistent quality for highly capable programs.

**Rationale:** Washington State is failing to maximize one of its most precious resources – the gifts, talents, and high interests of many of its students. In a broad range of intellectual and artistic endeavors, these youngsters are not challenged to do their best work. This problem is especially severe among economically disadvantaged and minority students, who have access to fewer advanced educational opportunities and whose talents often go unnoticed. Without support for Highly Capable Education Programs, districts statewide cannot identify and serve children desperately in need of an educational program that allows them to continually improve their learning with consistent quality and appropriately trained teachers. Failure to provide support for Highly Capable programs may put this cohort of students at risk academically, socially, and intellectually.

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**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**Proviso regarding the next two issues relating to Mathematics:** It is not in the best interest of the association to include both math issues on the final legislative platform. Therefore, only one of the two Math issue proposals may move forward on the WSPTA legislative platform. The Math issue receiving the greatest number of votes will remain on the prioritized platform of the WSPTA. The Math issue receiving the least number of votes will be removed from the platform. **NOTE: If one or both Math issues are not approved by a simple majority vote as provided in the Legislative Assembly standing rules, this proviso is null and void.**

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**Title: Mathematics**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that advance professional development and ongoing assistance for math teachers, community involvement in the selection of math curricula, and family collaboration in teaching math.

**Rationale:** The need to use a "balanced" approach to math education, including computational fluency, efficient use of algorithms, and opportunities for students to self-discover math principals and concepts, is essential for today's students. There is a great need for differentiated teaching and curricula that support student learning styles, as well as a need for coherent math curricula - each year's math work should lay foundations for the next year's math work. Students need greater opportunities for rigorous math courses in secondary education. Currently, only two years of math are required for graduation. If a student takes math in 9th and 10th grade they run the risk of not being ready for postsecondary education or the workforce since math must be used to maintain skills and knowledge.

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**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

**Title: Math & Science**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that strengthen scientific and mathematical education in Washington State, including but not limited to enhanced pre-K through college education in mathematics and the sciences.

**Rationale:** Washington State needs to ensure that curricula are keyed to world-class standards in math and science education, there is sufficient local flexibility to meet the needs of children with different learning needs and styles; ensure that Washington K-12 teachers are not restricted from “supplementing” their school approved curricula with materials which, in their best professional judgment, could improve the math or science learning of any student in their class; ensure that each K-12 math and science student in Washington State has a textbook in each subject, providing easily understood explanations of any concepts required to do schoolwork and homework, available for use at home and at school throughout the school year; provide opportunities for every Washington State student to pursue mathematics and science courses beyond the current graduation requirements; implement "catch up" programs, once new standards are in place, to ensure that children are able to meet new world-class state standards by the time of graduation; and eliminate gender barriers to math and science education and achievement in mathematics and the sciences in pre-K through college and in professional development and opportunities.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: DO NOT PASS**

**Committee Recommendation Rationale:** The Legislation Committee believes the language in this issue is overly prescriptive and would not provide the flexibility needed by local school districts to adopt the most appropriate curriculum. The Legislation Committee believes that the language offered in the previous Math proposal better addresses student needs and parent requirements.

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**Title: Medically Accurate Sexual Health Information**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that all public schools follow the guidelines published by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and provide a medically accurate sexual health curriculum.

**Rationale:** Providing a responsible and effective health curriculum would make a major impact not only on youth, but on society at large. In 2005 the OSPI and Department of Health worked collaboratively to publish a set of guidelines for sexual health and disease prevention. This document lays out the standards for a scientifically and medically accurate sexual health program. By adopting these standards as part of the curriculum students across the state can be assured of an accurate and complete sexual health education curriculum.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**Title: World Language and International Competencies for all Children**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that substantially increase world language study in all grades; but especially in grades P through 5 where it has

not been previously available; and support teaching and learning about world economy, cultures, geography and history in all grades.

**Rationale:** As citizens of Washington State, we participate in a globally interdependent world. One of every three Washington State jobs is impacted by international trade, making our state one of the most trade-dependent in the country. Yet students can graduate from Washington high schools without ever having studied a language other than English. Public schools in Washington State (and throughout the United States) are behind other countries in their offering of world languages and international curriculum in public schools. If our students are to compete in a global economy, they must have language skills and a broad knowledge of international cultures, history, geography and economies.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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### K-12 Public Education -- Funding

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**Title: Full Day Kindergarten Funding**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that fund full-day kindergarten programs, should individual school districts choose to implement them

**Rationale:** Parents want what's best for their children. Research shows that full-day kindergarten programs are very successful and provide an excellent academic foundation for young children. In addition, students who attend full-day kindergarten have fewer grade retentions. More and more school districts recognize the academic benefits of full-day kindergarten and are implementing a full-day K program. Unfortunately, Washington State only provides funding for half-day kindergarten and districts must either charge parents or absorb the costs of the extra half-day from their general fund. Full-day kindergarten allows children and teacher's time to explore topics in-depth, reduces the ratio of transition time to class time, provides for greater continuity of day-to-day activities, and provides an environment that favors a child-centered, developmentally appropriate approach.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**Title: Funding Inequities**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that eliminate the inequities in Education Funding formulas to include but not be limited to teacher salaries, levy lids, and levy equalization.

**Rationale:** There are inherent funding inequities in the existing funding system. The state does not pay for teachers the same across the state based on inequitable grandfathering rules. The levy lids are not determined using equity; they are grandfathered lids that were set 30 years ago. The PTA is a statewide organization that keeps kids at the front of the discussion. It is not in the best interest of kids to have some received less funding than others when there is no logical reason to the reduced funding. In those disadvantaged school districts, it makes it more difficult to recruit and keep teachers, and provide programs and services to the kids.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**Title: K-12 Public Education Funding**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that establish an updated definition of basic education and a basic education funding formula that reflects current education practices and requirements. The redefinition and funding formula must fulfill the State's

obligation to fully fund education as its paramount duty by providing ample opportunities for all students to achieve higher learning levels consistent with standards-based education reform. The funding system must ensure accountability by generating consistent and transparent accounting processes.

**Rationale:** For over 25 years the WSPTA and parents, educators and concerned citizens across the State have advocated for full compliance with the mandate of the Washington State Constitution to fund education, and we have long advocated for high standards and the resources needed to achieve those standards. Additionally, in recent years education advocates have requested a re-definition of the basic education act. The basic education funding formula has been essentially frozen since its adoption 30+ years ago, despite commitments at that time to phase in improvements. The introduction of standards-based education reform over 10 years ago has not resulted in a parallel adjustment of either the definition of basic education or the funding formula. With the momentum from Washington Learns, the study that we advocated for as a top issue for several years running, the state and all parents and those who care about the future economic and cultural success of our area have an opportunity to fulfill our goal of ample education funding.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**Title: Reduce Class Size**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that support funding and policies that secure smaller class sizes for students.

**Rationale:** Compelling evidence demonstrates that reducing class size, particularly for younger children, has a positive effect on student achievement overall and an especially significant impact on the education of disadvantaged children. The PTA is a strong advocate for reducing class size to help raise student achievement, especially in high-poverty, at-risk schools. In addition to increasing student achievement, smaller classes improve classroom atmosphere, students receive more individualized attention, and teachers have flexibility to use different instructional approaches/assignments.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**Title: School Construction and Renovation**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that provide for state-level remodel and new construction funding of school facilities based on the development of state standards, review process, timeline, dedicated source of funding and auditing procedures for these projects.

**Rationale:** School districts throughout Washington State are faced with record high enrollments, new demands for technology, and the health and safety hazards of deteriorating facilities. Children learn best in adequate, up-to-code, well-maintained facilities. The state needs to develop baseline standards for building remodel, replacement, and new construction and identify a dedicated funding source. Then, the state needs to figure out how to fund these projects by finding a dedicated source of funding. Using this method will ensure that there will be a minimum building standard enjoyed by all students. Increased state funding would give districts a larger portion of local funds to spend in areas critical to meet district education needs which in turn would alleviate the need for PTA fundraising to supplement basic costs.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**Title: Special Education Funding**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that provide for full funding of the actual costs for all of the required services for special education students, as defined by individual education plans required under federal law.

**Rationale:** Funding the actual costs of required special education services is the legal obligation of the state and federal government and they should be fulfilling that obligation. Currently, because the state is not meeting its obligation, local districts are required to spend millions of dollars in local levy funds to back-fill this state basic education responsibility, which unnecessarily increases the local property tax burden. Local levy dollars should be used for enhancements and enrichment activities, not basic education that the state fails to adequately fund.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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### K-12 Public Education – Student Support

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**Title: School Recess**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that support policies which require regular recess periods, supervised unstructured breaks, throughout the school day; and ensure and support additional research on the effects of recess on the developmental domains (social, emotional, physical, and cognitive), and on the effect of recess on academic achievement; develop policies and resources necessary to support an awareness of the importance of recess and of active, free play in the development of children; and support research and professional development that facilitate every educator's and school staff member's skills in observation and assessment of the developmental growth of children through the play process.

**Rationale:** Time is the missing element in our national debate about learning and the need for higher standards for all students. Schools are captive of the clock and calendar, and statewide, the trend is growing to maximize instructional time at the expense of recess. During the last 20 years, there have been major changes in the economic, political and social environments in which children are being raised. Beginning in kindergarten, increasing emphasis is put on programming children for global competitiveness in order to propel them into an economically viable future. However, Washington State law requires the number of instructional hours that school must provide, and defines that recess qualifies as part of those instructional hours. Legislation should require that districts create policy with community input to safeguard recess for elementary school children to ensure breaks for free play and physical activity.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**Title: Student Support Services**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that support student success in school by adequately funding K-12 school libraries, school nurses, and school counselors.

**Rationale:** Students in today's society face greater challenges and risks than in any preceding generation. The opportunity for these students to seek support from trained professionals about the many issues they face is critical to their success. As schools face more and more budget challenges, services that support students are being cut. School librarians are essential to students learning how to manage all the information they are presented with daily. The school library is the foundation upon which to build a life-long love of learning and exploring. Further, without appropriate funding, particularly as fiscal and academic pressures increase in the future, more districts will be in a position to be understaffed with school nurses and will face issues around meeting the mandated and ethical health needs of students in the district. Adequate funding of counseling services will ensure that the students' emotional needs are being met, thus

providing them with an environment conducive to effective learning. Improved student learning will result in improved test scores, enhancing the public image of our schools.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**Parent and Family Involvement**

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**Title: Military Recruiting in High Schools**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that offer all Washington state high school students and their parents a free and fair opportunity to avoid aggressive recruitment by all branches of the U.S. military.

**Rationale:** The federal “No Child Left Behind Act” requires school districts to release to military recruiters the names, addresses and phone numbers of all students who have not “opted out” on their FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) forms. The term “opt-out” refers to a parents’ or students’ ability to request their records and contact information not be disclosed. The Federal Student Privacy Protection Act makes a simple change to the No Child Left Behind requirements ensuring schools release private information to military recruiters only if families request it, rather than the other way around.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Not Pass**

**Recommendation Rationale:** The Legislation Committee believes that the WSPTA should continue to lobby for strong communication between home and school regarding a parent’s right to opt-out of disclosure of student information as well as supporting student and family privacy rights. The Committee felt the language of this issue could be construed by delegates and others as unsupportive of the United States Military, and our young men and women who are serving our country, and would become a divisive issue rather than an issue WSPTA could unite around.

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**Title: Parent Access to WASL Test Booklet**

**Issue Statement:** The Washington State PTA shall initiate and/or support legislation and/or policies that by May 1, 2007, implement processes and procedures which allow parents to have complete and timely access to information about state required assessments, their student’s performance on any assessments, and any information related to areas of needed improvement in order to pass assessments.

**Rationale:** Parent could be more successful in helping their students prepare for state assessments if the entire test with the correct answers was released to the public. Washington officials often refer to Massachusetts as the model we should emulate on state assessments. Massachusetts releases most of its questions, along with the answers every year. This would be very valuable tool for parents to use in helping students prepare for the test. Parents should also have access to diagnostic information related to students’ ability to perform at standard on assessments. Improvement plans need to be discussed with parents and implemented with parents’ assistance. In sum, OSPI should be required to pursue a culture change which would embrace parents as valuable partners who have a critical role to play in student’s ability to perform successfully on state assessments.

**Legislation Committee Recommendation: Do Pass**

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**WASHINGTON STATE PTA**  
2006/07 PROPOSED LONG-TERM LEGISLATIVE PLATFORM  
*For Approval at 2006 Legislative Assembly*

**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; and 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; and 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 practices 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; restructure 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; and ample transportation funding.

**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 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; and 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; and safe and healthy schools which reduce environmental hazards; consistent, age-appropriate, unstructured play opportunities.

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For more detailed information regarding the proposed priority issues can be found at [www.wastatepta.org](http://www.wastatepta.org) (Legislative page.)

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