

Top 5 Legislative Priorities for 2017

*Washington State PTA creates Legislative Priorities utilizing a representative process which includes 132,000 members across the state to promote policies that support our vision:
That every child's potential become a reality.*

Social Emotional Learning

Prioritize school climate through strong social and emotional learning supports to maximize learning opportunities that help Washington students succeed in school and life.

- Integrate social emotional learning and trauma informed practices in the education system, teacher and principal preparation programs and professional learning.
- Ensure adequate staffing of psychologists, counselors, social workers, behavioral specialists and nurses in schools.

Amplify Fund Basic Education

It is time to keep the promise made to the children of Washington State in the McCleary decision by fulfilling Washington State's paramount duty to amplify fund basic education.

- Funding solutions must be progressive revenue sources that are sufficient, sustainable, and equitable.
- Solutions must not cut services that support the whole child, or rely only on redistributing existing education funds.

Closing the Opportunity Gap

Provide teacher training and student supports that include effective solutions to close the educational opportunity gap by:

- Completing the implementation of the recommendations of the Educational Opportunity Gap Oversight and Accountability Committee (EOGOAC), and
- Implementing the 2016 HB 1541 to close the educational opportunity gap.

Standards for Para-educators

Provide a quality education for all students receiving instruction from para-educators by establishing:

- Statewide standards, training, and career development for para-educators,
- Minimum employment standards, certification and endorsements,
- Training for teachers who have para-educators assisting in their classrooms, and their principals.

Breakfast After the Bell

Washington State currently ranks 45th for utilization of the federal school breakfast program and currently, only 1/3 of eligible children have access to this program.

- Supports legislation instituting and funding a Breakfast After the Bell Program in high needs schools.
- Initiate policies that encourage early adoption of Breakfast After the Bell Programs at the district level.

For more information, contact ptalegdir@wastatepta.org. For a full description of the platform and Top 5 issues, please visit: <http://wastatepta.org/advocacy>.

2017 WSPTA Supported Issues

Improving Educational Outcomes for Foster Children

Currently less than 50% of foster youth graduate from high school and less than 4% go to college. We support efforts to increase high school and college graduation rates through the creation and support of services which will facilitate smooth transitions between schools for foster youth at risk of not receiving credit for work completed.

Engaging Families in Student Success

Increase school and family partnerships that result in increased family participation by:

- Adopting a clear definition and title for Family Engagement Coordinators
- Expanding funding to at least 1.0 FTE Family Engagement Coordinator per school, starting with high poverty schools first.
 - Start: 2017-18 school year;
 - Completion: 2020-21 school year

Post-Secondary/Higher Education Access and Affordability

Washington state has the leading economy in the nation and a skills gap that can only be closed by increasing access and affordability of Post-Secondary education, including associate & bachelor degrees, and career & technical degrees/certificates with affordable tuition and local access to all programs while still supporting "State Need Grants" and "College Bound" scholarship programs.

Removing Barriers to Implementing ECEAP (Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program)

High quality early learning is a smart investment that helps children succeed in school and life. Washington State PTA supports policies to ensure access to high quality early learning by expanding ECEAP, the state pre-K program including:

- Expanding capacity by eliminating systemic barriers
- Supporting quality early learning through multiple means

Restorative Justice and School Safety

Enhance school safety by incorporating restorative justice models in discipline processes while supporting family and community-based alternatives to achieve youth accountability. Reduce racial and ethnic disparities by leveraging local school districts and juvenile justice systems to institute equitable policies on discipline, safety and justice.

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