

## Vision for Washington's Education System

The Washington State PTA proudly represents approximately 131,000 members from across the state through active school-based PTAs, 32 regional councils and an elected board of directors. Members adopt a two-year legislative platform and vote on resolutions that are so universally accepted they are foundational to the WSPTA's state agenda. The following resolution topics guide the WSPTA's vision for Washington's education system:

- Parents are valued as the primary influence in their children's lives and family engagement is state funded and encouraged at all levels of a child's education.
- The K-12 education system is funded through stable, adequate and sustainable revenue, including possible increases to revenue, while continuing to protect funding that supports the health, safety and welfare of children and their families.
- The legislature funds the prototypical schools formula, and allows for clear and transparent revisions to the formula so that ratios meet student and school needs. In other words, the funding formula should also ensure that children with certain needs or different learning styles receive ongoing, adequate support to meet state learning standards. In particular, this includes children with special needs, students struggling with academic and non-academic issues, non-English speaking students, and students who come from homes of poverty.
- School construction funding allows for new construction, modernization, and safety requirements, while also providing a fair and reliable square footage allocation formula which recognizes modern educational needs and alternative facility use. Local bond measures are passed by a simple majority of voters.
- In the transition to ample state funding for our K-12 public school system, a school district's total funding should be no less than the district's prior total of state and local funding, and should permit cost-based and rational differences in the maximum state Local Effort Assistance per student, such as a district's high-cost students and operating in a high-cost region.
- Smaller class sizes are an essential element for increasing student achievement, and adequate state resources are available to support both the operational and capital needs of K-12 CTE programs.
- Districts receive funding that supports the full cost of providing educational services to all students who qualify for special education, with no cap applied to the number of students.
- The system embraces local control and supports innovative, engaging and rigorous instructional programs. Research-based instructional support and funding is provided in the state's persistently lowest achieving schools and students affected by the state's opportunity and achievement gaps.
- Policies create a balanced assessment system with high standards and multiple ways for students to demonstrate learning. The system does not use a single indicator for making decisions about students, such as grade promotion, high school graduation, or entrance into specific educational programs.
- The system and Legislature recognize the importance of also supporting funding and access to services that support the social and emotional health and well being of all students. This includes supporting programs that identify, reduce or eliminate violence by or against youth; safe routes to schools; Internet safety; suicide prevention; continuation of anti-harassment and bullying programs; support for alcohol, drug and tobacco prevention programs; and children's mental health and counseling.

Many reforms have already been enacted in the past seven years since ESHB 2261 (2009). While it is the Legislature's prerogative to revise the program of basic education, it is the hope of the Washington State PTA that once ample funding is provided to our public schools that lawmakers will allow the system to adjust without additional reforms or unfunded mandates that do nothing to improve student achievement.