



January 14, 2018

When the 2018 session opened for business Monday, January 8<sup>th</sup>, the committee schedule left no doubt that this session's pace would be more like the *Fast and Furious* and not *Driving Miss Daisy*.

On Day 1 of the 60-day session, among other committees, public testimony was heard in the House Education Committee; the House Appropriations Committee on Governor Jay Inslee's supplemental operating budget proposal; and the Senate Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks Committee on a controversial bill to address the Hirst water issue. Day 2 was also busy, with Governor Inslee's [State of the State address](#) and a proposed carbon tax; the Governor's spending plan in the Senate fiscal committee; and the House Capital Budget Committee unanimously passing a two-year construction package and bond bill out of committee. In the wee hours between Wednesday and Thursday, Senate Republican and Democrat negotiators reached an agreement on Hirst, with [SB 6091](#) voted unanimously out of committee. Later in the week the House passed [2ESHB 1508](#), informally titled "Breakfast after the Bell," sending it to the Senate by a vote of 83-15.

New this year is a Democrat-controlled Senate majority. Several afternoon hearings were delayed on Day 1 as Senators considered new rules for review of budget bills prior to floor votes during the opening day session. Democrats have a one-seat majority in the Senate, and all committee chairmanships flipped from Republicans to Democrats last winter. Democrats maintain a two-seat majority over Republicans in the House, and committee chairmanships remain the same as in 2017.

[Status of Legislative Priorities](#) (all bills may be accessed [here](#))

- Social and Emotional Learning:
  - HB 1377 from last session had a public hearing and was passed out of the House Education Committee. The bill addresses increased collaboration time for education professionals engaged in student mental health.
  - Bills have been introduced in the Senate and House to increase training on suicide prevention in schools (HB 2496/SB 6141); adding transgender students to the anti-bullying and harassment statutes (SB 5766); and to improve school climate (HB 2558).
- Ample Funding Basic Education
  - Many bills have been introduced specifically to address last session's education funding bill EHB 2242. These include: HB 2721/SB 6362 (OSPI proposal); HB 2717 (WEA proposal); HB 2763/SB 6394 (Pasco School District); HB 2366 (Federal Way School District).
  - HB 2303/SB 6004 would reduce the proposed increase in state property tax for Calendar Year 2018 from the \$2.70 adopted in last year's bill to \$2.40/\$1,000 assessed value.
- Closing the Opportunity Gap
  - SB 6209 would modify the academic acceleration program, automatically requiring students who meet state standard to be enrolled in the next most rigorous course and put a stronger

focus on dropout prevention programs.

- Standards for Paraeducators
  - HB 2698/SB 6388 would extend compliance dates for paraeducators hired by September 1, 2018 to September 1, 2019, and would appropriate \$500,000 in Fiscal Year 2019 and in Fiscal Year 2020 to support training.
- Breakfast after the Bell
  - E2SHB 1508 passed the House floor on Wednesday.
  - SB 6003 is the Senate's Breakfast after the Bell bill. WSPTA was represented by Vancouver parent Heather Lindberg in testifying in support of the bill.

Look for bills and committee hearings that relate to WSPTA's "Also Supported Positions" adopted at Legislative Assembly and WSPTA resolutions on the bill tracking list posted on the WSPTA Blog each week.

### WSPTA's Week in Review

WSPTA was represented at four public hearings this past week, including President Michelle Nims testifying on Governor Inslee's supplemental operating budget in both the House and Senate budget committees; Sherry Rudolph testifying on the Governor's proposed capital budget testifying to WSPTA's position on school construction in the Senate Ways & Means Committee; and Heather Lindberg testifying in the Senate Early Learning & K-12 Education Committee in support of Breakfast after the Bell. In addition, CEO Kathryn Hobbs and President Nims were invited by Governor Inslee to watch the State of the State address from the gallery.