



March 9, 2018

After a very busy 60 days, the Washington State Legislature adjourned Sine Die moments after 10 PM March 8. This was only the second time in the past 10 years that the Legislature has adjourned on time. The 2017 session went into multiple overtimes, clocking in at an unprecedented 193 days. With 2018 elections just months away, legislators prioritized meeting the deadline, and kept a quick pace throughout the session, moving and passing bills faster than usual in a short session.

The 2018 supplemental operating budget, getting a boost from an economy on the upswing, will fund K-12 educator salaries a year earlier and in compliance with a Supreme Court order from last November. In response to higher property tax bills because of last year's \$0.81/\$1000 Assessed Value (AV) increase, the chambers adopted a one-time property tax reduction for 2019 of \$0.30/\$1000 AV. It also adds funding to mental health, to comply with Washington Supreme Court Trueblood ruling.

Headed to the Governor's is [ESSB 6362](#), this session's "McCleary fix" legislation. The bill as passed the Legislature:

- Moves salaries to the 2018-19 school year for CIS, CLS, and CAS, as defined in the budget. (Section 202). For 2018-19 school year, the budget would increase the statewide minimum salary allocation to:
 - CIS = \$65,216.05
 - CAS = \$96,805.00
 - CLS = \$46,784.33
- Limits salary increases to cost of living, step increases, enrollment changes, and for CIS, professional learning and national board bonuses. (Sections 204, 207, 208)
- Holds districts that meet certain criteria harmless. See Section 401 of the striker for explicit details. \$12 million is set aside for districts meeting the criteria; funding is prioritized based on criteria in 401.
- Requires districts to create a subaccount for local revenues, including enrichment levies, and requires districts for the 2018-19 school year to spend enrichment levies for enrichment activities only. (Sections 301, 302, 306, 307)
- Extends K-3 class size compliance to 2019-20 school year. (Section 101)
- Increases special education multiplier from .9309 percent to .9609 percent. (Section 102)
- Removes the word "resident" from statutes related to LEA and levies. (Sections 303 and 307)
- Creates a three-year rolling average for high-poverty LAP. (Section 101)
- Allows a district west of the Cascades to get a 6% regionalization factor if it borders a district that is one tercile higher than that district. (Section 203)
- Creates a four-year 4% experience factor increase for districts that have CIS median years of experience that exceed the statewide average CIS staff years of experience and a ratio of CIS staff advanced degrees to bachelor's degrees above the statewide ratio. The LEAP document is [here](#). (Section 203)

- Creates a transportation alternate grant program, when funded, for per pupil transportation costs that exceed what a district receives from the formula. (Section 103)
- Creates a work group under OSPI to define a minimum “work day.” Recommendations are due by January 14, 2019. This is in a separate section. (Section 209)
- Directs school districts to take certain actions related to highly capable students (Section 105).
- Delays the start of state-funded professional development days to 2019-20 school year. (Section 402)
- Does not include limits to half-days, early release, late starts.
- Makes several technical changes.

The Governor has 20 days (not counting Sundays) from Sine Die to act on bills (March 31).

In the closing days of the session came announcements from eight House members and one Senator that they would not be seeking re-election. These include: Republican Reps. Dan Kristiansen (outgoing House Republican leader), Terry Nealey (ranking member House Finance), Jay Rodne (ranking member, Judiciary), Larry Haler, Melanie Stambaugh, and Liz Pike; Democrat Reps. Judy Clibborn (Transportation chair) and Ruth Kagi (Human Services & Early Learning chair); and Senate Republican Michael Baumgartner. All retiring members said they would serve their term through next January. Yelm Rep. JT Wilcox was elected by Republicans to replace Kristiansen as House Republican leader.

Status of Legislative Priorities

(all bills may be accessed [here](#) and typing in the bill number):

- Social and Emotional Learning:
 - [HB 1377](#) passed the Legislature this year, minus the work group. The bill defines certain school employee positions, such as social workers and psychologists, and directs districts with more than 2,000 students to set aside at least six hours of collaboration time during the school year between school counselors, social workers and psychologists. Last session funding was provided to continue the work of the SEL benchmarks group.
- Ample Funding Basic Education
 - ESSB 6362 passed the House and Senate on party-line votes: 50-47 in the House and 25-23 in the Senate (Senator Michael Baumgartner, R-Spokane, refused to vote.)
 - Use these links to watch the [House](#) and the [Senate](#) debates on final passage and concurrence.
- Closing the Opportunity Gap
 - Nothing new.
- Standards for Paraeducators
 - [SB 6388](#) passed the Legislature. \$250,000 for training and the modules is included in the 2018 supplemental operating budget.
- Breakfast after the Bell
 - Governor Jay Inslee signed 2ESHB 1508 into law on Wednesday ([Chapter 8, Laws of 2018](#)). The 2018 supplemental operating budget included \$1.2 million to implement the bill. This was about half of what had been requested.

Here’s a quick look at some of the bills that relate to WSPTA’s “Also Supported Positions” adopted at Legislative Assembly and WSPTA resolutions that are on their way to the Governor’s desk for action:

- **Dual Credit, Equity & Support.** [SB 5917](#) passed the Legislature. While the bill only directs Washington’s institutions of higher education to adopt policies regarding granting credit for IB and Cambridge exams, it requires the policies to be posted clearly by fall of 2018. In addition, institutions of higher education must report back to the Legislature by 2020 on the credits they are granting.

- **Dyslexia.** [E2SSB 6162](#) will require school districts to provide interventions and screening for **dyslexia** for students in grades K-2, starting in the 2021-22 school year. The bill was substantially modified on the House floor to address multiple issues. It includes a work group to review best practices and possible screening tools.
- **Post-secondary/Higher Education Access & Affordability.** The 2018 supplemental operating budget includes \$18.5 million to expand the State Need Grant.
- **School meals.** [ESHB 2610](#) will require districts to take specific actions to ensure students who qualify for free or reduced-price meals have access to meals at school, along with more specific actions to notify parents or guardians about the eligibility. The bill also prohibits schools and districts from taking action directed at a student under the age of 15 to collect unpaid school meal fees, and from stigmatizing a student who cannot pay for a school meal. Among the requirements, schools and districts, at least monthly, are required to directly certify students for free school meals if the students qualify because of enrollment in assistance programs.

Not this year

- **Assessments.** No action was taken to delink assessments from graduation requirements this session. Also, because a savings was projected from the assessment changes in HB 2224 of 2017, OSPI is directed to report on the savings included in the 2017-19 operating budget and, if the savings haven't been reached, to report on how they can be achieved.
- **Family & Community Engagement.** [ESHB 1618](#) failed to make the March 2 cutoff. Legislators said it was a good bill but the momentum this year was on mental health professionals.
- **Foster Youth.** [SSB 6223](#) failed to make the March 2 deadline.
- **Post-secondary/Higher Education Access & Affordability.** [HB 1512](#) passed to Senate Ways & Means but failed to make the Feb. 27 cutoff.
- **School Construction.**
 - [SB 6531](#) would have phased in increases for the student space allocation and the actual construction cost over six years, starting in the 2019-21 biennium. The bill didn't make it past the House Capital Budget Committee.
 - A Joint Legislative Task Force on School Construction was created in the 2017-19 capital budget. House members have been named: the appointments include Democratic Reps. Marcus Riccelli and Monica Stonier, and Republican Reps. Vicky Kraft and Mike Steele.
- **Teacher Shortage.** [4SHB 1827](#) ended up being too complex and too big to pass in a short session. The ideas in the bill provide a good launching pad for a bill next session.

Good to know

- **2018 capital budget.** The legislature adopted [ESSB 6095](#), a supplemental budget. While a second round of K-3 classroom grants was not included, additional funding was provided for about nine school districts that had costs increase due to the delay in adoption of the 2017-19 capital budget.
- [2SHB 1896](#) will require districts with high schools, starting in the 2020-21 school year, to offer a mandatory, stand-alone half credit in **civics education** to every student. The exception would be where civics can be embedded in courses that offer the opportunity for both high school and postsecondary credit. This is starting to raise some issues regarding how it would be incorporated into the 24-credit diploma, and how districts would fund curriculum changes to create the new stand-alone course.
- **Property tax reduction.** [SB 6614](#) enjoyed various iterations over the course of the session but ended up with a one-time decrease of \$0.30/\$1000 Assessed Value for CY 2019 collections.