WSPTA recognizes that preparing students for career, college, and life is dependent on an excellent, engaged teacher in every classroom. Washington has an estimated annual shortage of 3,000 certificated teachers, especially in STEM, special education, ELL, early education (birth – grade 3), and elementary (K-8).1,2

Background

- In school year 2016-17, 85% of principals could not find fully-certificated teachers to fill all their teacher openings.2
- 97% of human resource directors say they are struggling or in crisis, and 74% said it is getting worse.2
- Washington’s teacher workforce is less diverse (10% non-white) than students (44% non-white.) Diversifying the teacher workforce is one effective strategy to narrow Washington’s opportunity gap.1,3

Factors Causing the Shortage2

- Implementation of state-funding for full-day kindergarten and K–3 class size reduction.
- An increase in school district hiring of teachers since the “Great Recession”.
- Increased retirements of the “baby-boomer” generation.
- Student enrollment growth.
- A smaller number of individuals completing teacher preparation programs.
- New teachers leaving the profession (20-25% attrition rate).3
- Availability and costs of alternative routes to certification.

Proposed Solutions

The Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that recruit and retain effective educators, develop a diverse workforce, and ensure equity and access to educator preparation through:

- Funding of recruitment and conditional scholarship programs;
- Expansion of Professional Educator Standards Board-approved conditional certificates and alternative routes to certification;
- Phased-in expansion of Beginning Educator Support Team (BEST) grants4 to all schools.

For More Information

Nancy Chamberlain, WSPTA Advocacy Director
ptaladvocacydir@wastatepta.org

Marie Sullivan, WSPTA Legislative Consultant
legconsultant@wastatepta.org

For more information on the WSPTA advocacy program, please visit our website (www.wastatepta.org)
Citations

1. Professional Educators Standards Board (2016). Grow Your Own Teachers: Enhancing Educator Pathways to Address Teacher Shortage and Increase Diversity
   https://www.pesb.wa.gov/data-reports/grow-your-own-teachers-report/

   https://app.leg.wa.gov/CMD/Handler.ashx?MethodName=getdocumentcontent&documentId=NRoW0T3q948&att=false
