

WSPTA Testimony on SB 5317 Sen W &M
2/20/19 JACB SHR 4 3:30pm

Good afternoon again. I am Nancy Chamberlain speaking on behalf of the Washington State PTA.

This bill aligns well with our legislative priority to support safety planning in schools.

When I began representing Washington State PTA on the School Safety Advisory Committee almost a year ago, I realized how underprepared our schools are. While schools are mandated to have comprehensive school safety plans, there is no guidance, funding, or accountability to have the plans, and little coordination with emergency management agencies or first responders.

The regional school safety centers to provide technical assistance are huge steps in the right direction.

This bill addresses the various types of school safety drills, but a critical one is missing: The National Association of School Psychologists states, " A predetermined and practiced **reunification** process helps to ensure that **reunification** will not add to the anxiety and trauma of the crisis." We agree. Active shooter or other emergency situations lead to chaos, and parents will do whatever they can to reach their children. If they are prepared, have good communication and are trained, they won't hinder first responders and make a traumatic situation worse.

We urge you to support Senate Bill 5317, and consider an amendment to add family/student reunification as a factor in school safety planning. Thank you.