

January 26, 2020

## Focus Day meetings a success

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Nearly 100 WSPTA members visited Olympia on January 20, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, to focus on legislative priorities, meet with their legislators and testify on bills before the House and Senate education committees. In addition, Superintendent Chris Reykdal visited with attendees for about 20 minutes, sharing his vision to tear down barriers to dual credit opportunities for high school students.

Also, in a first-ever (at least in recent years) push to secure the funding for the additional two days of paraeducator training, WSPTA President Janice Kutzero, Advocacy Director Sherry Rudolph, and Executive Director Andrew Estep joined with their counterpart leaders from Public School Employees/SEIU 1948 to meet with House and Senate leadership and budget writers. The partnering of the two organizations was noticed by legislators, who said it was a powerful approach. In 2019, the Legislature funded two of the four days (14 of the 28 hours) needed for the paraeducator fundamental course of study. Putting standards and training in place for paraeducators, who provide 62% of the instruction to students with disabilities, English Language Learners, and students who aren't at state-level standards, has been a priority for WSPTA since the 2015 legislative session.

Legislators continue to introduce bills, even with the February 7<sup>th</sup> policy deadline looming, and the pace hasn't slowed one bit. Both the House and Senate conducted floor action last week. The Senate passed [SB 5395](#), comprehensive sexual health education, on a party line vote of 28-21. (The previous week, the House Education Committee heard a report from Comprehensive Sexual Health Education Work Group members, including [WSPTA representative Jen Cole](#).) A less controversial bill, HB 1304, passed 95-1, with two excused. The bill establishes the Vocational Alternative Learning Experience Pilot Program and directs OSPI to select up to 10 school districts to participate in the program, including at least two districts with multidistrict online programs.

In committee action, the Senate education committee took public testimony on several bills to address local effort assistance funding and an OSPI-request bill to increase special education funding by about \$11 million for students who spend 80% or more of their time in general education classes, along with a bill to increase flexibility in the use of Learning Assistance Program dollars.

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

### Policy

- [Preventing Gun Violence. Many bills have been introduced related to guns. Here are some of the ones that track most closely with our platform:](#)

- HB 2240/SB 6077 is Governor/Attorney General request legislation to restrict high capacity magazines to 10 rounds. The Senate bill was heard January 20<sup>th</sup> in the Senate Law & Justice committee, and the House bill had a hearing January 21<sup>st</sup> in the House Civil Rights & Judiciary committee.
- HB 2241/SB 6076 is another joint request bill that restricts assault weapons and large capacity magazines. HB 2241 was also heard on the 21<sup>st</sup> in the House CRJ committee.
- HB 2467 would create a centralized single point of contact background check system for firearms transfers. The bill was scheduled for a vote last week but hasn't moved out of committee. The bill has bi-partisan sponsorship, and a substitute bill was presented.
- HB 1010, which would give the Washington State Patrol the same authority as other law enforcement agencies to destroy confiscated weapons, passed the House 56-42, with one Democrat voting against.
- Screening for Highly Capable Students.
  - HB 1641 and SB 5354 are the screening bills from the 2019 session. The bills have not been activated yet this session but are available vehicles for the position adopted by WSPTA at the 2019 Legislative Assembly.
  - SB 6282 is not related to screening but is focused on recent changes for highly capable programs at Seattle Public Schools. The bill had a heated hearing on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, with some lively exchanges between Seattle Public Schools leadership and bill sponsor Senator Jamie Pedersen, D-43.
- Protecting students from immigration issues (Resolution 18.25)
  - SB 5834 would protect student information so it couldn't be used for immigration purposes and would require school districts to adopt model policies. A request to consider a 500-foot "school safe zone" was met with interest but we were informed it may not be legal so additional research is being done. The bill has not been scheduled for action.

### *Budget*

- Paraeducator funding, \$40 million. The Governor's proposed supplemental operating budget did not include funding for the training days required by law.
- Dyslexia funding (Resolution 18.32). The Governor's proposed supplemental operating budget did not include the \$806,000 requested by OSPI to get this effort started in school districts, in advance of the 2021-21 mandate.
- LEA funding Several bills have been introduced related to levies and Local Effort Assistance.
  - HB 2237/SB 6075 would allow school districts that go beyond the \$2.50/\$1,000 assessed value to access up to \$2,500 in LEA funding. The Senate bill received positive reviews from those testifying in Senate education.
  - HB 2753/SB 6344 would give school districts the choice of either a \$2.50/\$1,000 AV levy or \$2,500 per student. The bill removes the "whichever is less" language from current law and applies to collections in calendar year 2021. The Senate bill is scheduled for public hearing January 27<sup>th</sup> in Senate education.
  - SB 6510 would provide school districts smaller than 300 student FTE with additional LEA, with the amount set in statute plus inflation. The bill was heard last week with no opposition.

- Two additional bills have been introduced that deal solely with enrichment levy levels: SB 6477 and SB 6533. The first bill would allow any district with a levy that hasn't lapsed to go back and use the collected amount for Calendar Year 2018 for two additional years: 2021 and 2022. SB 6533 would change the maximum per student levy amount to \$3,000 for any school district. Last session two tiers were created for per-student amounts: \$3,000 for Seattle and \$2,500 for all other school districts. The bills are up for public hearing this week on January 27<sup>th</sup>.
- [Student safety and well-being](#), and support for a behavioral health specialist at each Educational Service District (ESD). The Governor's proposed supplemental operating budget included funding to support one behavioral health specialist per ESD.
- [Capital budget: seismic retrofits](#) \$25 million OSPI request. The Governor's proposed supplemental capital budget included \$10 million in support of seismic work. On January 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Senate Ways & Means Committee held a [work session on OSPI's K-12 seismic retrofit program](#).

Look for bills and committee hearings that relate to the above-listed issues, Top 5, and WSPTA's "Also Supported Positions" in the Week Ahead and Bill Tracking List.

## The Previous Week

- Laura Peterson of Everett testified in favor of HB 2428, a bill that would create a work group to address issues related to medications and processes for students with life-threatening allergies.
- Heidi Bennett of Seattle testified in favor of SB 6132, which would expand the use of Learning Assistance Program (LAP) funds to hiring school counselors and behavioral health specialists.
- Dr. Gwen Loosmore of Mercer Island spoke on the first panel with victims of gun violence in support of HB 2240 and HB 2241.
- Susan Leusner of Tacoma testified with concerns about SB 6117, the bill that increases the special education multiplier (and adds about \$11 million to special education funding) for students who spend 80% or more of their time in general education classes.

## The Week Ahead *(Schedule subject to change, all bills can be founded through this [link](#))*

*Monday, January 27*

### Early Learning & K-12 Education (Senate) - SHR 1, JACB - 1/27 @ 1:30pm

- SB 6344 - Public Hearing - Concerning school district enrichment levies.
- SB 6477 - Public Hearing - Limiting school district enrichment levies. (Hearing is on the Proposed Substitute.)
- SB 6533 - Public Hearing - Concerning school district levies.

### Education (House) - HHR A, JLOB - 1/27 @ 1:30pm

- HB 2288 - Public Hearing - Creating statutory authorization for school-based health centers. (Support/Medium)
- HB 2643 - Public Hearing - Concerning educator recertification requirements regarding youth suicide screening, referral, and safety planning.

- HB 2653 - Public Hearing - Determining cultural bias in kindergarten assessments.
- HB 2708 - Public Hearing - Establishing a work group on school-based health centers.
- HB 2816 - Public Hearing - Nurturing positive social and emotional school and classroom climates. (High)

#### **Appropriations (House) - HHR A, JLOB - 1/27 @ 3:30pm**

- HB 2704 - Public Hearing - Establishing a competitive grant program for community sexual assault programs to provide counseling services in schools.

*Tuesday, January 28*

#### **Human Services & Early Learning (House) - HHR C, JLOB - 1/28 @ 1:30pm**

- HB 2591 - Public Hearing - Concerning youth eligible for developmental disability services who are expected to exit the foster care system.
- HB 2661 - Exec Session - Expanding accessible, affordable child care and early childhood development programs.

#### **Education (House) - HHR A, JLOB - 1/28 @ 3:30pm**

- HB 2631 - Public Hearing - Creating a family engagement framework.
- HB 2660 - Public Hearing - Increasing the availability of school meals provided to public school students at no student cost.
- HB 2690 - Public Hearing - Providing students with equitable access to a high-quality public education by developing an infrastructure that assists public schools in the delivery of integrated student supports.
- HB 2711 - Public Hearing - Increasing equitable educational outcomes for foster care and homeless children and youth from prekindergarten to postsecondary education.

*Wednesday, January 29*

#### **Civil Rights & Judiciary (House) - HHR A, JLOB - 1/29 @ 8:00am**

- HB 2623 - Public Hearing - Prohibiting the possession of firearms by persons convicted of certain criminal offenses.

#### **College & Workforce Development (House) - HHR B, JLOB - 1/29 @ 1:30pm**

- HB 2523 - Exec Session - Expanding access to higher education.

#### **Human Services & Early Learning (House) - HHR C, JLOB - 1/29 @ 1:30pm**

- HB 2591 - Exec Session - Concerning youth eligible for developmental disability services who are expected to exit the foster care system.
- HB 2737 - Public Hearing - Updating the children's mental health work group.

#### **Appropriations (House) - HHR A, JLOB - 1/29 @ 3:30pm**

- HB 2788 - Public Hearing - Concerning local effort assistance for charter schools.

*Thursday, January 30*

#### **Commerce & Gaming (House) - HHR C, JLOB - 1/30 @ 8:00am**

- HB 2546 - Public Hearing - Concerning the potency of marijuana products.

### **Education (House) - HHR A, JLOB - 1/30 @ 8:00am**

- HB 2589 - Public Hearing - Requiring contact information for suicide prevention and crisis intervention organizations on student and staff identification cards.
- HB 2864 - Public Hearing - Establishing a running start summer school pilot program. (If measure is referred to committee.)

### **Agriculture, Water, Natural Resources & Parks (Senate) - SHR 3, JACB - 1/30 @ 1:30pm**

- SB 6518 - Public Hearing - Reducing prenatal exposure and harm to children by limiting environmental exposure to certain pesticides.

### **Higher Education & Workforce Development (Senate) - SHR 2, JACB - 1/30 @ 1:30pm**

- SB 6542 - Public Hearing - Adopting a uniform statewide automatic admissions policy at the four-year institutions of higher education.
- SB 6561 - Public Hearing - Creating the undocumented student support loan program.

*Friday, January 31*

### **Early Learning & K-12 Education (Senate) - SHR 1, JACB - 1/31 @ 8:00am**

- SB 6505 - Public Hearing - Expanding access to dual credit opportunities by eliminating direct costs to students and families.
- SB 6512 - Public Hearing - Providing housing to school district employees.
- SB 6521 - Public Hearing - Creating an innovative learning pilot program.

### **Civil Rights & Judiciary (House) - HHR A, JLOB - 1/31 @ 10:00am**

- HB 1315 - Exec Session - Concerning concealed pistol license training requirements.
- HB 2240 - Exec Session - Concerning high capacity magazines.

Olympia [Capitol Campus Map](#)

HHR refers to hearing rooms in the John L. O'Brien Building

SHR refers to hearing rooms in the John A. Cherberg Building