

## Top 5 Legislative Priorities

<p><b>Increase Access to Nursing, Mental Health, and Social Emotional Learning Staff</b></p>	<p>Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support the medical and mental health of all students P-12 with innovative funding solutions for increased non-teaching staff including but not limited to nurses, counselors, psychologists, and social workers in schools, provided in-person or according to the best practices in telehealth access.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Support Students and Preserve Education Funding</b></p>	<p>Washington State PTA shall advocate for legislation or policies that support students during and after COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect early learning, K-12, post-secondary, and child-related programs especially:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Resources for students needing additional supports (academic, physical, or emotional)</li> <li>○ Local effort assistance funding.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Authorize flexibility within transportation and categorical allocations to allow districts to meet students' needs, retroactive to March 1, 2020, through August 31, 2022.</li> <li>• Address the state budget deficit without creating or increasing funding inequities:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ With progressive, sufficient, sustainable, and equitable revenue sources</li> <li>○ Avoid mid-year budget cuts and/or redistribution of existing education funds.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Allocation of new state or federal funding to support:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Students who receive special education services or are furthest from educational justice</li> <li>○ Meals for children and youth facing food insecurity</li> <li>○ COVID-19-related childcare and school-age-student care needs</li> <li>○ Social and emotional health of students and staff.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Increasing Educational Equity by Closing the Digital Divide</b></p>	<p>Washington State PTA shall support legislation, policies, and funding that ensure equitable digital inclusion and access for all students, families, and staff, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appropriate technology:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Robust, up-to-date, universal broadband infrastructure</li> <li>○ Affordable broadband internet service</li> <li>○ Developmentally appropriate internet-enabled devices.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Effective engagement in online learning:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ District-wide consistency in learning platforms</li> <li>○ Professional development for educational staff including social emotional learning, equity, and social justice in online environments</li> <li>○ Leveraging community partnerships, especially those that serve marginalized communities</li> <li>○ Training and technical support for families and caregivers, that are accessible and delivered in a culturally competent context</li> <li>○ Consideration for personal privacy issues and adherence to data privacy laws</li> <li>○ Identification of and support for sharing of best practices among districts.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Supports and Funding for Students with Disabilities and Their Families</b></p>	<p>Washington State PTA shall support legislation and policies that uphold the following for students with disabilities and their families:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make resources, program services, parent education, and training accessible including:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Local resource centers</li> <li>○ Implementation of a statewide online portal.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Ensure that a range of appropriate devices and assistive technology is available.</li> <li>• Provide access to multi-tiered systems of support (MTSS).</li> <li>• Remove barriers and increase flexibility within categorical funds to meet the greatest needs.</li> <li>• Remove the 13.5% cap on funded enrollment for districts.</li> <li>• Fully fund and implement the federal government's obligations under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).</li> </ul>

**Prevent and Reduce Gun Violence and Suicide**

Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that prevent and reduce gun violence and suicide including:

- Identify, address, and mitigate the disproportionate impact on communities of color, LGBTQ+, and other affected groups.
- Fund community-based prevention strategies.
- Fund school mental health supports and a statewide anonymous reporting system.
- Encourage school districts to partner with gun safety experts to educate their communities and promote safe firearm storage.
- Prohibit the sale or transfer of military-style assault weapons.

**Also Supported (listed alphabetically):**

**Equitable Identification and Services for Highly Capable Students**

Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that:

- Achieve equitable representation in highly capable (HiCap) programs via universal screening, including students who are low-income, Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), highly mobile, ELL, and students with disabilities; and expand OSPI reporting to include all subgroups at the school district level.
- Expand the identification and services for students who qualify in one academic area (math/reading) to all districts.
- Ensure that HiCap curriculum and professional development (academic and SEL) are provided to all identified students and the staff that serves them.

**Mitigating the Adverse Impacts of Climate Change**

Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that build a socially, economically, and environmentally sustainable climate for our children that:

- Adopt and enforce legislation that mitigates the effects of climate change.
- Provide funding and technical assistance to jurisdictions to develop and implement Strategic Climate Action Plans (SCAP) that reduce school district, community, and regional greenhouse gas emissions.
- Equitably address adverse impacts to communities disproportionately affected by climate change.
- Acknowledge that climate change is a health crisis that disproportionately and adversely impacts children and youth.

**Safe School Plans and Emergency Preparedness**

Washington State PTA shall support legislation or policies that support emergency preparedness in schools through:

- Funding the regional school safety centers to provide training and technical assistance for the development, annual updating and implementation of comprehensive safe school planning including continued operations plans.
- Providing resources to districts for emergency supplies and equipment.
- Verifying compliance of emergency planning coordination between districts, local, and regional emergency management, including first responders and families.

For a full description of the platform and Top 5 issues, please visit: <https://www.wastatepta.org/focus-areas/advocacy/>.

For more information, contact WSPTA Advocacy Director Sherry Rudolph at [ptaadvocacydir@wastatepta.org](mailto:ptaadvocacydir@wastatepta.org) or WSPTA Legislative Consultant Marie Sullivan at [legconsultant@wastatepta.org](mailto:legconsultant@wastatepta.org).